BING

SUMMER
1997

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THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE

Founded 1950

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Mainland Europe, including Eire	£9 per annum
USA and Canada	US $20 per annum
Australia and New Zealand	A$30 per annum
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All remittances should be sent in **£ sterling** payable to 'Michael Crampton - ICC' with the exception of (a) U.S. and Canadian members who should send their remittances in U.S. dollars to F. B. Wiggins (b) Australian and New Zealand members who should pay David Currington in Australian dollars (c) Mainland European members (not Eire) who should pay Etty Gits in **£sterling.** For addresses see inside front cover.

Articles for inclusion in the magazine should be sent to the Magazine Editor.
Other Correspondence concerning membership, non-arrival of the magazine or other aspects of the club's affairs should be sent to the Hon. Secretary/Treasurer.

BING is the official journal of the International Crosby Circle and is published in the Spring, Summer and Winter of each year. Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ICC. All original material © Copyright ICC 1997

EDITORIAL

This is the last issue of BING prior to the twentieth anniversary of his passing and it is very pleasing indeed to read of the CDs being issued in commemoration. It would be nice if there was a special TV programme as well but this may be asking too much. Undoubtedly there will be radio tributes and we look forward to bringing you details of these. It hardly seems possible that it is 20 years since we heard that shock news. I am sure that we can all remember where we were when we learned of Bing's death and speaking for myself, it was a news-flash on TV that stopped me dead in my tracks. It was as though I had lost a near relative and over the next day or so, people were ringing me to express their condolences. The headlines in the newspapers the next day were remarkable and it is hard to imagine such headlines today for the death of an entertainer. Radio and TV tributes, news bulletins and press coverage continued for several days and it really was similar to the death of a head of state. Time passes and memories fade but how good it is to see the re-emergence of interest in Bing's career again. Long may it continue.

The Spring edition of BING was a little later than usual. I was a week late getting the material off to the printers due to several contributions being delayed and the printer hit problems with his equipment. As is usual when BING does not arrive when expected, many members wonder what has happened and doubts such as whether they have paid their subscription emerge. The phone calls and letters at such times are very heavy and whilst it is generally nice to hear from members, I do have a full-time job and in self-defence, I took my telephone number out of the magazine some editions ago. This meant that the vast majority of calls in the UK were directed to Michael Crampton's home. Unfortunately, Michael was working away from home and so Judy Crampton had to field the calls. Most enquiries were polite and pleasant at reasonable times of the day. Unfortunately, some were at 7:30 a.m. in the morning whilst others were late at night. There was one very unpleasant and abusive call to Judy which unfortunately we have not been able to track down and if we find who the member was behind this, he will be ejected from the Club in the full glare of publicity. Wig Wiggins too was bombarded with enquiries and I know that he will want to have me hung, drawn and quartered if the magazine is late again. We do apologise if the magazine is occasionally later than expected but please be as patient as possible before chasing your volunteer management team.

This edition is being put together at the end of June as the rain continues to fall and Wimbledon looks like over-running into a third week. It seemed entirely appropriate to use our cover photograph under the heading 'Summer'. This may have initially baffled our USA readers but hopefully the photo will appeal to the British sense of humour. Let's hope that we are having a heat-wave when you are reading this. The back cover picture has been supplied by Peter Haizelden in memory

of Don Haizelden and this very rare item comes from the Saturday Evening Post of January 30, 1932.

The diary of Bing's life is at the printers as I write and I hope will be issued by the time you receive this magazine. The diary contains much new information about Bing and I hope that it will stimulate members to send in more data of missing dates and events. I am maintaining the diary on computer and I will expand it and correct it as facts become available with occasional updates appearing in BING.

A huge collection of Crosbyana has been donated to the club by member Ted Burnell and much of this will be sold for club funds. With Michael being asked to sell two other large collections on behalf of deceased members, the problem I raised in my last Editorial continues to be relevant. What is going to happen to all the Crosby collections out there? We could do with a museum or archive in the UK which could be used to store Crosby collections and perhaps our best hope is to liaise with an existing Museum who could develop a Crosby section. We shall of course encourage members to pass on items to Gonzaga but the shipping costs are probably too great for UK members to send anything but rare correspondence and articles. Suggestions from members will be welcomed.

I shall be aiming to submit the material for the Winter edition to the printer on October 25th so will all intending contributors please bear this date in mind. I am anxious for members to receive the Winter issue before Christmas so please submit your articles well before the deadline.

Malcolm Macfarlane

SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

1997 is proving a good year for Bing enthusiasts as we learn of the interesting promotions which aim to commemorate the 20th. anniversary of Bing's untimely passing. Ken Barnes, Jim Reilly, Leslie Gaylor and others are working with MCA and United Artists to bring us at least 5 CDs all of which will remind us of Bing's prodigious talent. We wish these ventures every success.

Yours magazine recently featured an article on Bing and as a result of our name being given, we have had many enquiries about the International Crosby Circle and the service we offer. Pleasingly we have gained new members who now share with us the delights of club membership.

New Members

Mrs D McMahon (Manchester), Mr. R E Bennett (Cardiff), Mrs S Lee (Doncaster), Mr. R C Wilkinson (Norwich), Vera Campbell (Hessle), Margaret Rattigan (Knock, Co Mayo), George Witt (Chatham), Peter Richards (Derby), Jacqueline Lord (Edinburgh).

Australia
Robert Chinchen (Turramurra NSW), William Brown (Swansea NSW).

Deaths

Members will be saddened to learn of the death of two of our enthusiastic members to whose families we extend our sincere condolences.

Rennie Yates of Nelson in Lancashire and **Ken Deacon** of Romsey in Hampshire.

Ken's friend and fellow member, Ken Miles of Southampton, has told us of Ken's neat written records of Bing's recordings. Ken would not take any sleeve notes for granted, checking all detail with meticulous accuracy and where there were inaccuracies, he would then notify the publishers. Ken was an area manager for Midland Bank and he leaves his widow Monica and two daughters.

Sale of Major Bing Crosby Collections

In the Trading Post section of the magazine, you will see an advert for a sealed bid auction of material generously donated to the club by Ted Burnell. Ted has also given us many other items as well and the sale proceeds will benefit the Club funds. In addition your secretary has been asked to handle the sale of two other major Crosby Collections. To facilitate the sale of all these items, I would like to establish a list of members who are interested in improving their collections. Items for sale include LPs, CDs, books, and many other items of Crosbyana. There are no lists of items for sale so could members please indicate their wants and you should expect to pay £5 for most LPs with a price of £10 for the rarer items. Bing Golf Porcelains will be around £35/55. 'Bing's Hollywood' (15 LPs) is available and we would hope to sell as a set for at least £10 per record. The limited edition Australian 'Crosbyana' set of 40 LPs is on offer as well for which a sale price of £10 per record is suggested. All enquiries to me please.

Leeds 1997

Our annual dinner/meeting will be on Sunday October 5 1997 and all are invited to this our 32nd meeting in Leeds. Until then my thanks to you all for helping make the International Crosby Circle a much respected club.

Michael Crampton

HUMANETTE

Our query in the last BING was partially answered by Bob Achorn who wrote as follows:
"In April 1931, Radio Pictures released a one-reel short film called 'Humanettes' built around puppets created by Bert Levy. The film featured Charles Judels (a well-known stage and movie comedian), the Rhythm Boys with Bing Crosby, and Gus Arnheim and his orchestra. Whether Arnheim and Crosby etc. simply provided the sound track, whether they were shown live or as puppets and what songs, if any were performed, I don't know. Maybe some reader does. The reference to this short subject is drawn from an excellent new book, 'The First Hollywood Musicals' by Edwin M. Bradley."

Radio Hall of Fame

In BING 111, Peter Cakanic wrote about the Radio Hall of Fame in the Museum of Broadcasting in Chicago and lamented that Bing was not included in this. We have now heard that Bing has finally been accepted for nomination for induction into the Radio Hall of Fame along with Eddie Cantor, William Conrad and Kate Smith. Winners will be inducted October 19, 1997.

An Evening with Bing Crosby

Frans van der Kolff picked up details from the Internet of an event taking place on July 25 at the Towe Ford Museum, Sacramento, California. The evening featured Bing's 1933 motion picture 'Going Hollywood' after a one-hour Wurlitzer Pipe Organ Concert of songs from the early 1930s, including many of Bing's. The evening was organised by Nick Langdon's Cosmopolitan Productions. We may have further information in our next issue.

BING IN THE USA

Wig Wiggins has single-handedly built up our USA membership list by over 500% since 1989 and I know that he and his ever patient wife, Laura, are involved with Crosby matters almost on a full time basis. In his spare time, Wig has sent us his usual 'Letter from America'.

BING'S GOLD RECORDS

To commemorate the twentieth anniversary of Bing's death, MCA will be releasing a special compact disc this fall which will contain all of the single gold records that Bing made during his quarter century with Decca records. Fellow ICC member Andy McKaie, MCA Vice President for Catalog Developments and Special Markets, has told me that **"BING'S GOLD RECORDS"** will be on the market in time for the 1997 holiday season.

Although most of Bing's gold records have been reissued previously on various LPs or CDs, this will be the first time that they have all been included in one album. Also, MCA is planning to utilise the original million-selling versions of each song for this new CD, including Bing's 1942 recordings of 'White Christmas' and 'Silent Night', and his 1944 recording of 'Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral'. If all goes as planned, collectors will, at last, be able to have the "best of Bing" on one CD exactly as determined originally by the record-buying public. This new CD should, therefore, become a popular replacement for other reissues that have utilised Bing's later re-recordings of several of his more popular Decca best sellers instead of the original versions.

I am working with Andy McKaie on this new MCA compact disc release and will be writing the liner notes for the CD booklet. I trust that ICC members all over the world will welcome the opportunity to add this unique commemorative disc to their own collections.

BOOKS ABOUT BING

Elsewhere in this issue, ICC members will find a review of a new 171-page hardcover book about the 'Road' films, entitled 'The Road to Box Office: The Seven Film Comedies of Crosby, Hope and Lamour', written by Randall G. Mielke. American and Canadian ICC members can order copies of this book directly from the publisher, McFarland & Company, Inc., Box 611, Jefferson, North Carolina 28640. The publisher's price is $37.50 (post-paid) in U.S. funds.

Fellow ICC member Timothy Morgereth, author of the excellent book about Bing's career that was published originally in 1987, entitled 'Bing Crosby: A Comprehensive Discography, Radio Program List and Filmography', has a few copies still available for sale to other ICC members at a special reduced price. While supplies last, this 554-page hardcover book can be ordered by American and Canadian members through me at the special price of $35.00 (post-paid) in U. S. funds. British and European ICC members can obtain copies through Micahel Crampton for the total price of £25 (post-paid). Books ordered in response to this offer will be mailed directly to members by the author, Timothy Morgereth.

MCA SPECIAL PRODUCTS COMPACT DISCS

The excellent series of budget-priced compact discs being produced by the Special Products Division of MCA now includes four CDs, each of which features a particular category of Bing's Decca recordings from the 1930s through the 1950s. Each of these CDs contains ten tracks, with very good sound quality, and they are reasonably priced at $6.00 to $7.50 each, depending on where you find them. The four CDs now available are Bing's 'Favorite Love Songs' (MCAD-20971), 'Favorite Country Songs' (MCAD-20982), 'Favorite Hymns' (MCAD-21002) and 'Favorite Hawaiian Songs' (MCAD-21008). Two of them, 'Love Songs' and 'Hymns' contain numerous tracks that have not appeared anywhere in the world. Jim Reilly gives further details in his 'Keeping Track' section.

Fellow ICC member Bob Zipkin of MCA, the producer of these budget CDs, has also informed me that a fifth disc, Bing's 'Favorite Irish Songs' will be released in time for St. Patrick's Day in 1998. Track details for the Irish CD will be available in the winter issue of BING. Unfortunately, MCA Special Products CDs are not available in every music store around the country. However, many Circuit City and Tower Records outlets do stock them, and they also can be obtained by mail order from Select Circles, P.O. Box 302, Riverside, Connecticut 06878. Telephone (203) 661-8421.

BING ON TELEVISION

Over the past four months, a number of Bing's films have again been shown on the nation-wide cable television networks that feature classic Hollywood movies from the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. American Movie Classics ran a 'Road' film festival in both April and May, with all seven of Bing, Bob and Dorothy's adventures appearing together, which was unusual. It was quite a treat for fans of the 'Road' films.

A complete list of Bing's films that were shown during the last quarter, is as follows:

MARCH 1997

The Bells of St. Mary's - A Connecticut Yankee - The Country Girl - Going My Way - High Society - Say One For Me - Welcome Stranger

APRIL 1997

A Connecticut Yankee - The Country Girl - Roads to Bali, Hong Kong, Morocco, Rio, Singapore, Utopia and Zanzibar - Say One For Me

MAY 1997

A Connecticut Yankee - Going My Way - The Magic of Bing Crosby (documentary) - Riding High - Roads to Bali, Hong Kong, Morocco, Rio, Singapore, Utopia and Zanzibar - Robin and the Seven Hoods - Say One For Me

JUNE 1997

High Society - The Magic of Bing Crosby (documentary) - Say One For Me - Variety Girl

Bing was also seen in a number of cameo roles during this period, including - Angels in the Outfield - Cancel My Reservation - The Greatest Show on Earth - Let's Make Love - My Favorite Blonde - My Favorite Brunette - Reaching For The Moon and Son of Paleface.

BROADCASTERS FOR BING

Radio stations in the United States seldom play Bing's records these days except, of course, during the Christmas holiday season each year. While there are a few nationally-syndicated programs which feature popular singers from the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, these rarely include anything by Bing - other than an occasional duet with Louis Armstrong or Rosemary Clooney, or another playing of Bing's last gold record from 'High Society', 'True Love'. It takes a lot of effort, and luck, to find one of Bing's records on the airwaves in the 1990s. Nevertheless, a few ICC members involved in show business - and with radio programs of their own in their local communities - are doing everything they can to keep the Old Groaner before the public by featuring Bing's records on their own broadcasts on a regular basis. Here is a brief description of the Bing programs of three of our fellow ICC members in widely-separated parts of the United States.

ARNE FOGEL - THE DEAN OF BING BROADCASTERS IN MINNESOTA

Professional radio personality Arne Fogel is based in the Minneapolis - St. Paul area, and presents a regular hour of music devoted to Bing every Saturday afternoon entitled 'Bing Crosby on Record'. A well-known jazz and popular music performer himself, Arne's Bing program can be heard on KLBB-AM (1400) in the Twin Cities. 'Bing Crosby on Record' has been a fixture on Minnesota radio for more than decade now. In addition to his Bing programs, Arne also performs as a popular singer himself both on radio and in personal appearances. For several years he appeared on the well-known national broadcast 'Prairie Home Companion' with Garrison Keillor, as well as on numerous Minnesota Public Radio network programs. ICC members in the Twin Cities area should tune in to Arne's long-running Bing program if they are not already a regular listener, and seek an opportunity to see Arne perform in person as well.

JIM JOHNSON - BING AND THE IRISH IN UPSTATE NEW YORK

Genial Jim Johnson hosts a popular 'Irish Hour' every Saturday afternoon on WEOK-AM (1390) in Poughkeepsie, in the Hudson Valley of upstate New York. Jim's Irish broadcasts frequently include several of Bing's own Irish favorites, especially since MCA released its 'Top O' the Morning' CD a couple of St. Patrick's Days ago. From time-to-time, Jim also presents special programs devoted completely to Bing's recordings, and not just Irish songs either! On such occasions, Jim is sometimes joined at the microphone by another ICC member, well-known cartoonist Joe Sinnott, also a Bing admirer resident in the Hudson Valley. Readers will remember the wonderful 'White Christmas'; drawing of Bing which Joe Sinnott drew especially for BING that appeared on the back cover of the December 1996 issue. Between Jim Johnson and Joe Sinnott, Bing is well-remembered on radio in upstate New York.

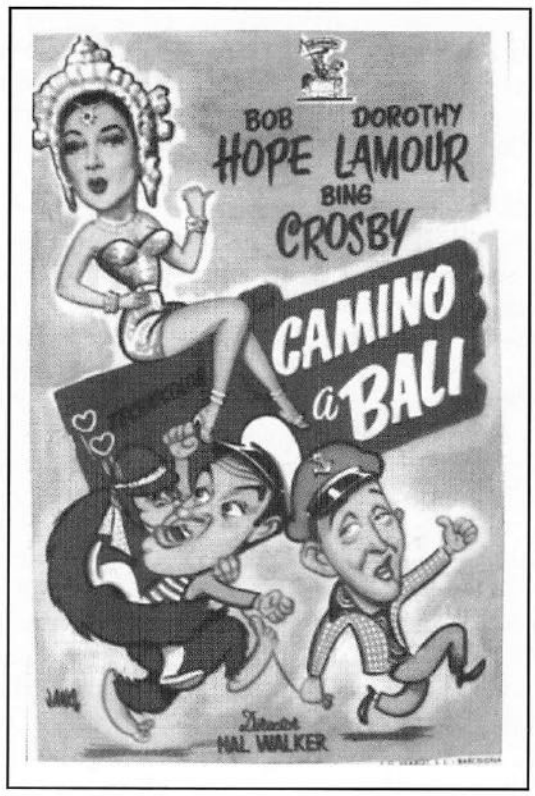
RON CANNATELLA - THE NEW KID FROM NEW ORLEANS

Over the past six months, I have had the personal pleasure of getting to know one of the most enthusiastic Bing broadcasters anywhere, Ron Cannatella, who is heard daily on WADU-FM (94.9) in the New Orleans area. Ron is only twenty-six years old, but he is rapidly becoming a very popular radio personality around the Crescent City through his regular programs devoted to the great singers of popular music, including Bing. Ron has done numerous special programs about Bing's life and career. He broadcast a two-hour Christmas special of Bing's records this past December and has just completed a six-hour chronological review of Bing's best recordings in May. I have been pleased to help Ron acquire various recordings for his Bing specials, and he assures me that "the best is yet to come" for his New Orleans listeners.

If any ICC members know of a 'Bing Broadcaster' in their area like Arne, Jim and Ron, please let me know so they can be featured in a future issue of BING. We certainly want to give all the support possible to those who are working to keep Bing's voice on the airwaves in this day and age! Also, if ICC members would like to have cassette tapes of typical radio programs which have been broadcast by Arne Fogel, Jim Johnson and Ron Cannatella, please contact me and I will arrange for them to be sent to you at a nominal cost.

Wig Wiggins

(Editor; Thanks, Wig for your continuing hard work. Plenty of mentions of the 'Road' films which gives me an ideal opportunity to reproduce three Spanish film adverts for the famous series. These have kindly been loaned to us by Peter Haizelden.)



Apalachcola F-L-A

Well, Orlando F-L-A actually but Bing didn't sing about that city and Apalachicola was the nearest I could get!

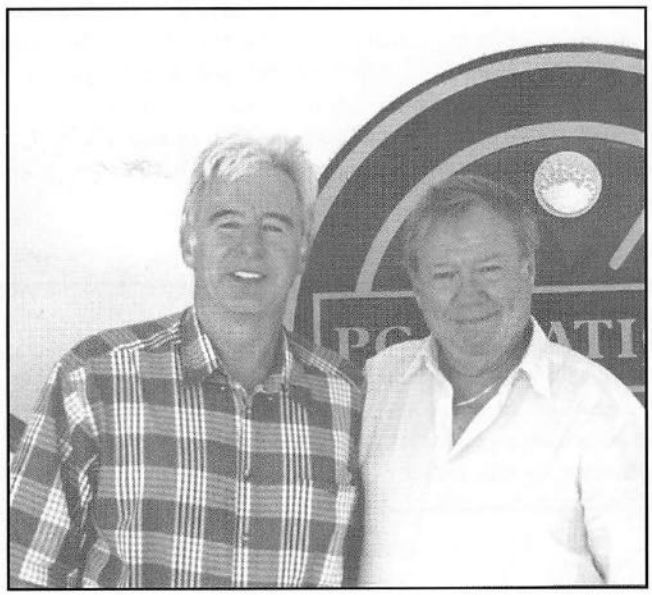
Yes, this year our annual trip to the USA took us for a relaxing holiday to Orlando in Florida. We had decided that this year we would relax by a pool instead of shooting around the country looking for Bing related matters. Bing had no connections with Orlando so we did not expect that there would be anything of interest to our readers arising from our trip. Funny how things turn out...

Arriving in Orlando in the middle of a tornado did somehow indicate that the weather was not ideal for sun-bathing and after several days of 'storm-watches' we took ourselves off to a very large 'flea-market' near St. Cloud. Vast numbers of people were there and guess who we met? The legendary former Crosby Collector Editor, Ralph Harding, who regularly holidays nearby!! My wife heard his voice behind her and she quickly picked him up and directed him to me. Ralph is still full of energy and continues to scour every second hand stall for Bing items, many of which he passes on to Colin Pugh. We had a cup of coffee with Ralph and a good chat about Bing matters. This seemed to stir me into action and as I trailed around after my wife in various shopping malls (it was still raining outside) I investigated the record shops (we should call them CD shops now shouldn't we?) and picked up the new budget priced MCA CD set which Wig has described more fully in his article. I can happily browse for hours in book shops while my better half looks at clothes and in the USA they have a rather different set of books to that which we get in the UK. Every show business book I pick up is routinely examined for mentions of Bing and I spotted several references which helped me fill a gap or two in my diary of Bing's life.

Roger Osterholm, who wrote the book **Bing Crosby - A Bio-Bibliography** lives an hour's drive from Orlando and regular contributor to our letter pages, Michael Collins, is not too far away from Roger. An ideal trip out therefore and we duly drove for lunch with Michael before going on to see Roger and Diane Osterholm. Michael Collins is originally from Ireland and worked as a Roman Catholic Priest in London before going to work in the USA ten years or so ago. I had been aware of Michael at some of John Marshall's gatherings in London in the mid 1980s but we really only knew each other through our correspondence. It was great to spend time exchanging opinions on the easy listening music scene and listening to a few tracks. Leaving Michael, we motored over to the Osterholm HQ and Roger and I were quickly looking at rare videos of Bing. Roger had spotted an old newsreel showing Bing and Bob Hope at the National Celebrities Golf Tournament in Washington D.C. in 1949 and fortunately he was quick enough to video it for posterity. (See Greg Van Beek's correspondence in our Letter pages for further details of this rare item). Roger also showed some rare footage of Bing entertaining the troops in France in 1944. Only a fleeting glimpse but very rare indeed. It would be marvellous if Festival Films could add these rare items to one of their future issues. Roger's latest book is the true story about the North Korean who 'stole' a MIG fighter in 1953 and flew it into South Korea.

Over the last year or two, I have been aware that our member Norman Wolfe is working on a book about Bing

called 'Troubadour' and we had corresponded briefly about this. Norman is the retired CEO of Cohn and Wolfe Worldwide and has written for films, television and radio. He divides his time between homes in Atlanta and Palm Beach. I telephoned him as we had decided to have a trip down to the Everglades and Miami which would mean passing his home at Palm Beach. Norman suggested that we should meet at his golf club, the PGA National, which we discovered is more like a small town than a golf club. There are five full size golf courses in the club as well as restaurants, shops and condominiums. Norman introduced me to Tony Toran who is working on a book on Russ Columbo and we exchanged information and opinions. Anyone who has any rare information on Russ Columbo should contact Tony at 7490 NW 48 Place, Lauderhill, FL 33319, USA and I know that he would be delighted to hear from you.



Norman Wolfe and your Editor at the PGA National Club.

Norman has done considerable research for his book on Bing and amongst others, he has interviewed Gary Crosby (just in time!), Basil Grillo and Mozelle Seger. He is also in touch with Mary Frances Crosby. If for any reason Norman's book does not get published, I asked him to consider whether he could write some articles for BING magazine as I should love to read about his meeting with Gary Crosby. He may well do this, and as a first step, a short article by Norman will be found alongside.

Going on to Norman's home, we were given a splendid demonstration of Bing's presence on the Internet and it was nice to see things which I had only previously read about in Frans van der Kolff's articles. I was still working on my diary of Bing's life at the time and Norman kindly delivered me to the West Palm Beach library where I managed to track down three of Bing's visits to Palm Beach to play in golf tournaments.

So as it turned out, Bing did crop up in my holiday. Next year, my wife wants to go to China as surely there won't be any Crosbyana there!

Malcolm Macfarlane

Sunday, Monday Or Maybe Never Again

Norman Wolfe considers a fascinating question

I sometimes am asked if it would be possible for a young Bing Crosby to achieve success today comparable to that which was his in a bygone era. I look wise and give every indication I know the answer and that the questioner has indeed come to the definitive source. Neither of these assumptions is correct and I have no crystal ball. I do have some thoughts, the concluding one being I doubt it. Too much has changed.

Often we amuse ourselves conjecturing about how heroes of other times might fare now. How many home runs could Babe Ruth hit? Would Bobby Jones defeat Jack Nicklaus on the golf course? In those instances, the milieu remains substantially the same. Baseball and golf basically are played as they always have been but the venues, through which Crosby established himself, have not merely changed. They have gone. Reborn today, Babe Ruth and Bobby Jones would find Yankee Stadium and Augusta National just the way they left them. A young Bing Crosby would not find Tin Pan Alley.

His career came out of the big bands, prime time network radio, the Hollywood studio system and single phonograph recordings, primarily of movie music. All of these have vanished. Yes, prime time network television is comparable to radio but it carries no musical variety programming. There is no Kraft Music Hall. Hollywood is a ghost town, everything but its memories seedy. There are no stars under contract making two, even three, pictures every year. The ever-dwindling number of studios shun musicals except for an occasional reprising of a stage hit, generally with disastrous results.

In just about 100 years, pop music has come full circle and is again commissioned for specific individuals or shows, rarely written on speculation or marketed directly to the masses as it was during the time of Crosby and Tin Pan Alley. The so-called "rap" music of today is ethnocentric and concentrates upon social statements not entertainment values. The sound and fury are all. No room for Crosby or Irving Berlin there. Nothing, apart from the limited output of the Broadway stage, is being written for older audiences so nostalgia flourishes even among people who don't really care to live in the past and would be ecstatic over a new Berlin or Walter Donaldson.

There is a sameness about country music which discourages permanent refuge so we spend hours listening to dead singers and band leaders. Fledgling Berlins may indeed exist today. There may even be young Crosbys but there is nowhere for them to go, no touring vaudeville shows, no Paul Whitemans, no Cocoanut Groves. If Crosby and Rinker were leaving Spokane tomorrow, I wonder what their plan would be.

My suggestion to them would be to find a Harry Barris as

soon as possible, not because they would need him as a performer but because Barris, before liquor destroyed him, was an excellent composer and original music is everything today when nobody sings anybody else's songs. A trio, with original music and a strong lead singer, might have a chance because small groups do well on records, in concert and with music videos. The short subjects for Paramount, in particular the singing of: "Auf Wiedersehn" and "Ghost of a Chance," indicate Bing would be effective in the latter, vital to the youth market. Crosby would have to concentrate on his lyric writing as much as his singing but who is to say there is not a segment of today's youth ready to respond to melodies which, (as Berlin would say) haunt you night and day, and the poetry of good lyrics articulated clearly by a non-screaming balladeer?

Still, I believe the epic scale, the universality of dominance which was Bing's alone, could not be replicated in today's world of segmented markets, niches and music which divides rather than unites as his did in those quaint, departed days when Junior sang the same thing Mom and Pop were singing.

I bandied this about with Gary Crosby shortly before his death and, perhaps curiously, this man, who single-handedly destroyed Bing Crosby's reputation for posterity, disagreed with my conclusions. He told me he believed his father could change music again.

"He'd bring it all back," Gary said.

Norman Wolfe

(Editor: Some thought provoking comments from Norman which I am sure will bring in correspondence from members. I have always thought that Bing was a product of his generation and that he was shaped by the influences around him. If he was re-born today, surely he would be shaped in a different way and his talents would emerge differently. He could be the Noel Gallagher of Oasis or the Gary Barlow of Take That. Norman is right though, I cannot see that anyone would be able to dominate all facets of show-business in the way Bing did. Michael Jackson is a "super-star" but can you see him winning an Oscar for acting? Could you see him fronting a weekly nation-wide show or starring in a series of comedy films? Members views would be welcomed.)

TRADING POST

Entries are free for all items of Crosbyana and there is a nominal charge of £2 for non-Crosby advertisements. All items are printed in good faith and we cannot accept responsibility for any dissatisfaction arising from the transaction as a result of these entries
Please send all advertisements to the Editor

Michael Crampton, 19 Carrholm Crescent, Chapel Allerton, Leeds LS7 2NL

Ted Burnell has donated a large number of Bing items to the Club and we are offering these to members. May

I have sealed bids for the following items by September 30. Postage will need to be added to all bids accepted.

1. Bing's Hollywood - 15 LP set - Brunswick BING 1 to BING 15
2. LP - Drifting and Dreaming - Brunswick LAT 8334
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4. LP - Beloved Hymns - Ace of Hearts AH 145
5. LP - Pepe - Colpix CP 507
6. LP - Ichabod / Rip Van Winkle - Decca DL 9106
7. LP - High Tor - DL 8272 (1985 reissue)
8. LP - The Man Without a Country - Decca DL 8020
9. LPs - Spokane 1 to 32 (bids accepted for individual LPs)
10. LPs - How the West Was Won - RCA RD-27196/7
11. LP - Dick Tracy in B-Flat - Curtain Calls 100/1
12. LP - Both Sides of Bing Crosby - Curtain Calls 100/2
13. LP - Star Spangled Rhythm (soundtrack recording) - Curtain Calls 100/02
14. LP - Bing Crosby on V-Disc Dan VC-5018
15. LP - Geraldine don't fight the feeling - Little David Ld 1001
16. 6 LP set - The Very Best of Bing - with extra LP 'Bing and Friends' - World Records
17. 8 LP set - Bing Sings Again - Readers Digest (USA)
18. 6 LP set - Bing Crosby's Treasury - The Songs I Love - Symphonette Society
19. 14 x C60 Golden Age cassettes containing Bing's BBC Biography (from 1973)
20. 40 x C60 Golden Age cassettes containing the radio series 'The Crosby Years'
21. 26 x C60 Golden Age cassettes containing the radio series 'Fifty Fabulous Years'.

All items in very good condition. Money back if not satisfied.

Back Copies of BING
Issue nos. 94, 95, 101, 102, 104, 107, 108, 110 and 113 are available for £2 each plus postage. Order direct from Michael.

Marion Lord, 13 Thorn St., Bacup, Lancs OL13 9JG (01706 -874715)

Small quantity of Bing Crosby sheet music for sale. Send SAE for list. Quite a few are American covers from movies.

Ken Mason, 12 Wycomb Grove, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE 13 1EQ

Ken has produced a very nice hand made A4 hard backed blue binder which takes ten BING magazines. The word 'BING' is in gold letters on the spine. Cost £6.99 including postage. An ideal way to store your

BING magazines and please order direct from Ken. Ken could easily amend the labelling to read BINGANG if you wish to have a binder for your BINGANG magazines as well. If sales go well, Ken will make a donation to the ICC.

Ronnie Coburn, Vaudevilla, Elliot Rd., Dundee, DD2 1SY Scotland (Tel. 01382 669025)

"As you can see by my letter heading, I am theatrical. I worked with a Scottish performer called Johnny Victory who was one of the greatest Crosby lovers of all time. I have his collection of Bing's records (78s). They have been in my possession for over 30 years plus Johnny's collections of hand made albums each containing Bing Crosby records with cuttings and photographs on each leaf containing a record. All put together with love and care in a very personal fashion. Would any member of your Circle be interested in this collection, maybe somebody up here on holiday would like to pop in and have a chat."

Alf Ward, 112 Commonside, Sheffield, S. Yorks S10 1GG

"BING magazines from early 1970s to Christmas 1996 - all free. Two copies of 'Bing' by Charles Thompson, the 'Seasons' album - all free. These articles must be collected. Any young member in South Yorkshire may be glad of these articles. Anyone interested, please phone me first on 0114 - 2687991."

Harry Gledhill, 20 Frederick Avenue, Barnsley, S. Yorks S70 6JZ

Could anyone help with a cassette of these please - any or all.
Pete Martin Interview - 1961
Wilfrid Thomas interview - 1960
If I Loved You 1945 (L3801)
Gotta Get Me Somebody to Love 1946 (L4184)
With Every Breath I Take S/T - 1934 (OEA 1652)
Narration from St. Luke (just Bing if possible) -1960

John Manston, Flat 9, Mortimer Close, Leominster, Herefordshire HR6 8PQ

John has the following three items for disposal. Free to any members who would like them.
CD 'How Lucky Can You Get'
Video 'The Bells of St. Mary's'
Video 'Bing Crosby's Merrie Olde Christmas'.

Allan Bevan, 11a Castle Walk, Southport PR8 2AR

"I spotted your ad on the back page of my Tony Bennett Appreciation Society magazine and hope you don't mind me writing, but as a trader in movie memorabilia I buy and sell material and could maybe have something of interest to your members. At present, I haven't much Crosby material to offer, only; Sheet Music
'Swinging on a Star' - small format, nice pic of Bing.
'Sunday, Monday or Always' - 2 small sheets, one has corner missing.
'If I Had My Way' - small sheet, good only.
'Along The Navajo Trail' - Bing and The Andrews Sisters.
'Busy Doing Nothing' - Bing and Rhonda Fleming - nice sheet.
'I've Got a Pocketful of Dreams' from 'Sing You Sinners' with cast, nice.
If you think the above is worth £10 to include P & P then I would be glad to hear from you!"

Lars Schinnerling, Westendstrasse, 20 D-63225, Langen, Germany

Lars has a sealed double CD 'Bing and the Andrews Sisters' which he offers for sale at £25. Also he is keen to acquire Bing sheet music and radio programmes and would like to hear from anyone who can assist him.

Roy Booth, 6 Stanney Close, Little Neston, South Wirral, Cheshire L64 9XR

Roy is a long time Crosby fan although he is a relatively new member of the ICC. He is keen to correspond with other Bing enthusiasts and would welcome contact.

Mrs. H. Wheatley, 26 Ditchling Rd, Offham, Nr. Lewes, Sussex BN7 3QP

"I enjoyed the item on Bing Crosby in 'Yours' magazine for May. I am writing to ask if anyone would be interested in a box set of Bing Crosby cassettes. It is 'The Best of Bing Crosby' and there are seven cassettes." Offers to Mrs. Wheatley please.

Ken Merry, 28 The Avenue, Bessacar, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN4 5JX

Cassette "Bing - A Unique Choice". Ballads taken from rare radio broadcasts and recordings from rare 78s. Ken has been collecting suitable material for this cassette over many years. The finished product represents one of Ken's ambitions to offer a selection of rare Bing Crosby songs to fellow Bing buffs. A long time member of Memory Lane, Ken has used cassettes of a high quality and wishes to do little more than cover his costs by asking only £4 (inc. postage).

Richard Selwood, 5 Abbotsfield, Wiveliscombe, Somerset TA4 2SU

"BING RARITIES! - LPs, tapes, radio shows, CDs - Also large collection of rare Al Jolson for sale (send large SAE).
DIGITAL NOISE REDUCTION! From your old tapes, reels or cassettes, high quality cassette masters using top quality studio equipment: state requirements."

Radio Days, 87 Lower Marsh, Waterloo, London SE1 7AB (Tel 0171 928 0800)

Your Editor stumbled on this shop some months ago and came away with sheet music and photographs of Bing. The proprietors, Nik and Christina Sutherland, specialise in collectibles, memorabilia and vintage clothing from the 1920s onwards. Well worth a visit if you are in the vicinity.

The Record Centre, 45-46 Loveday Street, Birmingham B4 6NR (Tel. 0121-359-7399)

Ray Purslow and his team will be delighted to supply Bing CDs and indeed CDs by many other artists who perform our kind of music. Ray specialises in mail order so don't hesitate to make contact with him by letter or phone.

Ken Crossland, 9 Arden Drive, Dorridge, Solihull, B93 8LP (tel. 01564 730108)

BINGANG

the official magazine of the American Club Crosby, is published twice yearly and is available from Ken Crossland. Annual subscription £11. For free sample copy, write to Ken enclosing a 36p stamp.

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PHOTOGRAPHS PERTAINING TO RADIO SHOW ADVERTISEMENTS(i.e. copies of ads, sponsors, etc.)
VIDEO CASSETTE OF "HERE IS MY HEART" & "TOP 'O THE MORNING" IN US VCR FORMAT

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Crosby Clubs Around The World

The ICC is pleased to be associated with the following Crosby Clubs. Please write to the addresses shown for further details.

Club Crosby, BINGANG
Wayne L. Martin, Editor
435 So. Holmes Ave., Kirkwood, Missouri 63122, USA
(HomePage:http://www.kcmetro.cc.mo.us/pennvalley/biology/lewis/crosby/bing.htm)
(Members in Europe should enrol via Ken Crossland, 9 Arden Drive, Dorridge, Solihull, B93 8LP)

Bing's Friends And Collectors Society,
Hobie and Cathie Wilson, 236 Andrieux St., Sonoma, California 95476-6909, USA (tel. 707 996 0257)

The Queensland Bing Crosby Society,
John Wright, 17 Thurecht Parade, Scarborough, Queensland 4020, Australia

The Victorian Bing Crosby Society
Bob Neate, 22 Pakenham St., Blackburn, Victoria, Australia 3130.

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OTHER APPRECIATION SOCIETIES

We have reciprocal arrangements with the following clubs and societies for publicity purposes. They kindly advertise our club in their magazines and we are very pleased to return the favour.

Sinatra Music Society, 183 Summerfields Avenue, Halesowen, West Midlands B62 9NU
This Society produces a most impressive magazine on a bi-monthly basis. The magazine includes features on all artistes performing quality popular music. The annual sub for UK members is £10 and write to Des Davis at the above address for details.
Sinatra Music Society, Dublin Branch, c/o Chris Hitchcock, 21 Roselawn Walk, Dublin 15, Ireland (phone: 01 8212418)

The Dean Martin Association, P. O. Box 80, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 1ZR

The Sammy Davis Jr Association, c/o Paul Iacovou, 6 Thyra Grove, North Finchley, London N12 8HB

The Judy Garland Club c/o Anthony R. Scarrott, Flat 3, 25 Holland Rd., Hove, East Sussex BN3 1JF

The Doris Day Society, 31 Kirkfield Rise, Ambleside, Cumbria LA22 9DX

International Friends of Gordon Macrae, c/o Mrs. Pat Robinson, 47 Lea Mill Park Drive, Yeaden, Leeds LS19 7YH

Tony Bennett Appreciation Society, c/o Mark Fox, 13 Sunnyside, Heckmondwike, W. Yorks WF16 0LN

Pat Boone Appreciation Society, P. O. Box 63, Sunderland, SR1 1PN

Guy Mitchell Appreciation Society, 11 Kierhill Rd., Balloch, Cumbernauld, Glasgow G68 9BH

Frankie Laine International Appreciation Society, c/o Tony Cooper, 18 Napier Crescent, Seamer, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 4HY

Alma Cogan Appreciation Society, c/o Stephen Woods, 9 Canterbury Avenue, Bowerham, Lancaster LA1 4AU

The International Petula Clark Society, c/o Terry Young, 38 Elmley Way, Margate, Kent CT9 4ES

KEITH PARKINSON'S
CELLULOID CROSBY

Our ambassador in the States, Wig Wiggins, was responsible for introducing Paul R Michaud to me. Monsieur Michaud contacted me earlier this year about a story he is preparing on the shooting of **Little Boy Lost.** He had already had a great deal of success in assembling material from local people who witnessed the shooting of the film on location at Montfort-L'Amaury. He had also been able to identify all of the sites where the film was shot. He was now wanting information on Bing's participation and the recordings relating to the film. Not a difficult task but it reminded me of how impressed I was when I first saw the film. Musically, it ranks fairly low in the Crosby film song canon. However, as a serviceable drama, it held my attention from first to last. It served as a foretaste of the Crosby acting skills which would be in evidence later in the same decade with **The Country Girl** and **Man on Fire.**

Bing and Claude Dauphin show Christian Fourcade the sights of Paris

Perhaps I shouldn't write off the films musical content without an attempt at explaining my disappointment. After all, Bing's regular film tunesmiths wrote three of the songs: *A propos de rien, Cela m'est egal* and *The magic window.* The titles themselves indicate a brief to write songs for Bing with a French flavour. This must have stifled Johnny Burke's ability to write typical Crosby ballads that implied love and romance without making it necessary for Bing to directly say as much to his leading lady. Yet it doesn't explain James Van Heusen's less than memorable melodies. Significantly this was the last time Burke and Van Heusen collaborated on songs for a Bing picture and maybe by now they had run out of originality and inspiration. The film's best song was given to Nicole Maurey to sing in the film. It was *Mon couer est un violon* which Bing recorded twice. His first shot was in March of 1953 when he recorded it as *Violets and violins* in Los Angeles along with the three Burke and Van Heusen numbers. That version had English lyrics provided by Jack Lawrence. A couple of months later he recorded an album of French songs in Paris and the original French lyrics were used. Its best known re-incarnation was in 1960 when it was a big hit for Ken Dodd under the title *Love is like a violin.* It was Doddy's recording debut, by the way.

Bing chose his leading lady. Nicole Maurey had the qualities which appealed to him. She had not appeared in an English language film before although she made her film debut in her native France at the age of eighteen in 1943. That the two performers were compatible is evidenced by her return engagement in a Crosby picture in 1960 when Bing asked her to be his leading lady in *High Time.* Although the commencement of shooting of that picture was less than two weeks away she agreed.

Filming in France began in September 1952. Bing was visited unexpectedly by British film director Michael Powell. Powell was planning an audacious update of Johann Strauss's operetta *Die Fledermaus.* He wanted an international cast and had Bing in mind for Captain Alfred. He felt the only way to secure Bing's support was to put the proposition to him in person. Powell outlined his plan to cast Maurice Chevalier as Colonel Eisenstein and Bing was polite but non-committal and Powell remembers he would talk of nothing but golf. Even so Powell approached Chevalier without revealing that Bing had not agreed to work on the film. As it happens, Chevalier was anxious to film with Bing but was concerned about billing. If you have a knowledge of the Chevalier ego you will not be surprised by his reaction. He told Powell, "I wouldn't expect to come in front of Bing, but I wouldn't like to come after him either." Powell suggested a compromise of on screen credits as "Bing Chevalier and Maurice Crosby", but by then he knew that his high flying ambitions would not be realised. Only Orson Welles would commit himself to the project for £30,000 provided his contribution could be filmed in three days. (In other words, he wasn't interested either). When Powell realised that Bing was not going to play Captain Alfred he lowered his sights somewhat and offered the part to Kieron Moore. It was not until 1955 that the film went before the cameras. To please the distributors and fool the public it was re-titled

Oh...Rosalinda!! Mel Ferrer was Captain Alfred with Michael Redgrave and Anthony Quayle playing the colonel and the general. The film was a critical and box-office flop.

Paramount planned to film more of **Little Boy Lost** in France than was achieved. This was because of constant rain. Paramount had no studio facilities booked in France and the unit returned to Hollywood. Sadly this co-incided with Dixie's death five days after Bing set foot on American soil once again. His wife had been diagnosed as being terminally ill before he went to Europe, but Bing was encouraged by her medical advisors to keep to his schedule because at that stage Dixie was unaware of the seriousness of her condition. Any departure from Bing's normal activities would only serve to raise concerns. The film required some final location shooting before completion and this was achieved in May, 1953, when Bing was in Paris recording his **Le Bing** album.

It was after this picture was premiered that Bing announced his retirement. He had a commitment to make two more pictures for Paramount. (They turned out to be **White Christmas** and **The Country Girl,** although his Paramount swansong was not until 1956 with **Anything Goes.**)

A fair if harsh review of **Little Boy Lost** came from American critic Pauline Kael. She wrote:

Bing Crosby is inoffensive in the lead, though he lacks an actor's tension; he's colourlessly "natural". Perhaps the picture is as effective as it is partly because the little boy (Christian Fourcade) is so totally unlike American children that we can see how Crosby would find it impossible to believe that this was his son. It should be a stinker and it isn't, quite - the movie's lameness and dullness seem to make it more touching.

A Spanish advert for 'Little Boy Lost' (supplied by Peter Haizelden)

Little Boy Lost did okay at the box-office. In *Variety's* list of 1953 money earners it just made the top twenty at joint nineteenth place with his previous outing for Paramount - **Road to Bali.** The combined North American grosses for the two pictures came to $3million, making it Bing's most successful year for cinema ticket sales so far.

Keith Parkinson

THE A-Z OF BING'S MOVIES

Keith continues to investigate the detail of Bing's movie work.

HENRY, WILLIAM. (1918-) Actor. Henry played Egbert Clarke in **Double or Nothing** (1937). Egbert was the brother of Bing's leading lady, Mary Carlisle, in the film. It was made at the start of Henry's adolescent acting career. He began at age 8 and played bit roles whilst still undergoing schooling. Things began looking up a few years after **Double or Nothing** and by the mid-1940s he had adopted the more manly first name of Bill as star in a several low budget "B" pictures with titles such as **The Invisible Informer** (1946) and **The Denver Kid** (1948). He was my hero for a while in the serial **Canadian Mounties vs the Atomic Invaders** (1953). His career petered out in the early 1970s, but not before he had appeared in a couple of quality westerns in the 1960s: **Two Rode Together** (1961) and **The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance** (1962).

HENVILLE, SANDRA. (1938-) Child actor whose career was over by the time she was four. Known to the world as Baby Sandy she made her debut in **East Side of Heaven** (1939) as a boy! The scene we all remember is cab driver Crosby serenading him/her with **That Sly Old Gentleman.** She was under contract to Universal before she was one year old and followed her Bing picture debut with **Sandy, Little Accident, Sandy is a Lady, Sandy gets her man** and Sandy steps out. By then it was 1941. She had been voted baby of the year by **Parents** magazine and featured on the cover of **Life** magazine. Her last film, released just after her fifth

birthday, was **Johnny Doughboy.** When she grew up she got a proper job as a legal secretary.

HER DILEMMA. Film. This was the British release title of **Confessions of a Co-ed** (1931). We weren't into Americanisms in those days.

HERE COME THE WAVES. Film. This 1944 flag waver for *Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service* was about as subtle a recruitment film as **Top Gun** (1986) proved to be for U.S. Navy pilots. Bing is Johnny Cabot, a successful singer not a million miles removed from the newer fella Frank Sinatra. Betty Hutton plays a dual role, the blonde Miss H. falling for Bing whilst her brunette twin gets him in the end. Bing is accepted by the U.S. Navy despite being colour blind and the scheming of the blonde Betty Hutton results in his being put in charge of a recruitment show aimed at swelling the ranks of WAVES. This enables us to hear the ever popular **Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive** sung in a Navy revue. By the time of the film's release at Christmas, 1944, it was apparent that World War II was nearing its end and it was seen as escapist entertainment of the first order. Audiences put it into *Variety's* top moneymaking films of 1944/5 and even the serious critics fell for it. In his first review of 1945 James Agee wrote in *The Nation:* "I would enjoy Crosby even if he did not amusingly kid Sinatra." But does anyone know why it took Bing thirty years to get round to recording one of the films major ballads, *That Old Black Magic?* Or why the title song, specially written by Johnny Mercer and Harold Arlen, was thrown away in the closing sequence to be sung by a chorus? Paramount and Decca had always capitalised on the publicity and sales generated by a title song 78 tie-in release.

HERE COMES THE GROOM. Film. There are a couple of tenuous links between this and the previous film. Both are connected with the films Academy Award winning song *In the cool, cool cool of the evening.* Johnny Mercer wrote the words and Betty Hutton was the songstress he had in mind when he composed it. It was to be featured in a film about Mack Sennett with Hutton being cast as Mabel Normand. A musical about Sennett and Normand had to wait a couple of decades when **Mack and Mabel** came to Broadway and the Johnny Mercer-Hoagy Carmichael composition of *Cool* stayed in a drawer. Then Bing heard a demonstration disc sung by Mercer with Hoagy providing piano accompaniment and the song was in. The other standout novelty song in the film was *Misto Cristofo Columbo,* written by Ray Evans and Jay Livingston. The plot outline is about Bing, a foreign correspondent who wants to adopt two French war orphans. To achieve this he has to be a married man. He knows the very girl. She is his ex-fiancee, Jane Wyman, who is about to wed her boss (Franchot Tone). You can fill in the rest. The reviewer for *Time* magazine thought likewise when he wrote: "Crosby and Capra (the film's director) are up to their oldest tricks and ought to amuse all but those optimistic moviegoers who dare to hope for new ones." Like *Little Boy Lost,* covered elsewhere in this magazine, *Here Comes the Groom* was placed 19th in *Variety's* top grossing films of the year, which in this case was 1951.

HERE IS MY HEART. Film. Made in 1934, it signified the end of Bing's original commitment to Paramount Pictures, which had called for an initial five movies over a three year period. It could have been specially written for Bing, as he is seemingly typecast as a millionaire radio crooner. In fact it was a remake of **The Grand Duchess and the Waiter,** a silent picture made in 1926 with Adolph Menjou in the lead. The story features Bing out to win the heart of the fair Princess Alexandra (Kitty Carlisle). There are the usual plot complications - Bing is arrested for illegally selling motor cars - but the film's brief running time of 75 minutes still allows Crosby to croon three songs which he truly made his own: *June in January, With Every Breath I Take* and *Love is Just Around the Corner.* In case there is any doubt, Bing's Paramount contract was extended for another three years after **Here is my Heart.** This must have surprised Bing because he went on record in August 1934 with the comment: "As soon as the current film musical craze has petered out - it is just about washed up right now - I'm through."

Bing with Marian Mansfield in 'Here is my Heart'

HERE LIES LOVE. Song. This Leo Robin - Ralph Rainger song was specially composed for the 1932 Paramount Picture **The Big Broadcast.** The first time we hear it is when Arthur Tracy sings it in a night-club scene. Then the orchestra of Vincent Lopez play it in another night-club scene. Bing finally gets a crack at it in a touching scene where he sings the song whilst tearing up the photographs of the girl that jilted him.

HEYMAN, EDWARD. (1907-1981). Lyric writer. Heyman had two songs in three separate Crosby pictures of the 1930s. They were *Out of Nowhere* in **I Surrender Dear** (1931) and **Confessions of a Co-ed** (1931) and *Moonburn* in **Anything Goes** (1935). A third song didn't make it although he wrote *After all, you're all I'm after* for **She Loves Me Not** (1934). By

the end of the 1930s Heyman was a permanent Hollywood fixture, writing the words for songs in average movies such as **Delightfully Dangerous** (1945), **Northwest Outpost** (1947) and **The Kissing Bandit** (1948). His classiest song was probably **Love Letters** which he wrote in collaboration with Victor Young.

HIGH ON THE LIST. Song. Composed for the film **Mr. Music** (1950) by Bing's film songwriters of the period - Messrs. Burke and Van Heusen - this was one of several strong ballads in the picture. In the film it is referred to as one of the earlier hits of songwriter Paul Merrick (Bing), although Merrick is trying to pass it off as a recent composition when he is bereft of inspiration.

HIGH SOCIETY. Film. Is there any reader of this magazine that has not seen this 1956 musical triumph? Just in case this listing is placed in a time capsule for the benefit of posterity, I'll repeat the precis of the plot printed in the *Radio Times Film and Video Guide:* "Time is short if playboy/composer C. K. Dexter-Haven (Crosby) is to reclaim his beautiful ex-wife Tracy Lord (Grace Kelly) before she marries another, especially with cynical reporter Mike Connor (Sinatra) caught up in the romantic complications." This is the most significant Crosby musical of the 1950s and I will be devoting a full article to it in Issue 117 of BING.

HIGH TIME. Film. On the other hand, this 1960 musical comedy for 20th Century-Fox is in a different league. That does not mean it fails to make for rewarding viewing. Bing excels at this sort of light comedy, even if he doesn't fall into the Cary Grant category. The film also contains a Sammy Cahn-James Van Heusen composition now regarded as a standard - *The Second Time Around.* If the picture failed it is because it attempted to appeal to the youth audience by casting Fabian and Tuesday Weld whilst hoping to bring in more mature audiences who were attracted by the top billing of Bing Crosby. The film fell between two stools and never secured a full circuit release in the UK. The plot concerns Crosby, a widower who owns a chain of fast food restaurants, returning to university to further his education. Half a dozen films have taken this basic premise in the last thirty years but whilst they rely on broad comedy in **High Time** Bing introduces a gentler humour and some old fashioned romance with his personal choice of leading lady, Nicole Maurey.

HIGH TOR. Regarded by the *Guinness Book of Film Facts and Feats* as the first ever television movie, this musical adaptation of a 1936 Broadway play was transmitted by the American CBS television network on March 10, 1956. It has never been screened in this country, although the Decca album was issued by Brunswick over here. There were some good songs in the adaptation although none considered hit parade material, hence none was released as a 78/45 single outside of the USA. The coupling chosen for that single was When You're in Love/ John Barleycorn, but the strongest ballad in the show was *Once Upon a Long Ago,* sung twice, first by leading lady Julie Andrews and then by Bing. The songs were written by the play's original author, Maxwell Anderson, and the producer of the television presentation, Arthur Schwartz.

HILL, BILLY. (1899-1940). American composer who wrote two of Bing's best loved cowboy songs. In **We're Not Dressing** (1934) we are only treated to a snatch of *The last round-up* although Bing had recorded a full version of it the previous year. Two years later there is a beautiful performance by Bing of *Empty Saddles* in **Rhythm on the Range.** Hill usually wrote his own words but for *Empty Saddles* he put a tune to a poem by J. Keirn Brennan. He studied classical music before becoming a cowboy, that latter occupation explaining his affinity with the above songs and other hits such as *Wagon wheels* and *Call of the canyon.* Bing also had great success with Hill's *There's a cabin in the pines.*

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Bing Crosby's Road to Hollywood

This is the latest video from Festival Films and what a blockbuster! Bing's early career is traced up to 1933 and many rare film clips are included in this 85 minute video. It was fascinating to see Bing and the Rhythm Boys in 'Confessions of a Co-ed' and with many excerpts from the Sennett shorts plus rare trailers of 'King of Jazz' and 'Going Hollywood' this is a real treat. The highlight for me though was seeing the short film 'Please' in its entirety. Filmed in Yosemite Valley in May 1933, we see and hear Bing sing 'You're Getting to be a Habit With Me', 'I Don't Stand a Ghost of a Chance' and of course the title song. Not to be missed! USA members have already received details direct from Wig and UK and European members can order PAL standard videotapes (i.e. they can be played on UK and European VCRs) from R. Dixon Smith, 58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE. Price £17 postpaid for UK members and £18 for those in the rest of Europe. See the separate advert for further details. Incidentally, there are still a few PAL copies of 'On the Road with Bing and Bob' available at £16. While supplies last, both tapes may be ordered for £27, which is a very good saving. All cheques should be made payable to R. Dixon Smith.

Movie Posters

Gorgeous photographic reproductions of Bing Crosby movie posters. Unless noted as "lobby" cards (11"x14") all posters are 11"x17" and come in heavy plastic sleeves.

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Bing Crosby's *Road to Hollywood*

Now on PAL! -- £17

"Bing Crosby's Road to Hollywood" is in stock!

(1997) 85 min. Produced and directed by Bob DeFlores and Ron Hall. Research assistance by Malcolm Macfarlane.

Bing's rise to fame is told through film clips, stills, ads, posters, sheet music, etc., plus interviews with Bing Crosby and Al Rinker talking about their early days. Film clips include the Rhythm Boys in "Confessions of a Co-ed," 1928 rehearsal footage of the Paul Whiteman orchestra, Bing and the Whiteman troupe on Universal's back lot with their new cars waiting for "The King of Jazz" to begin, two episodes of "Hollywood on Parade," trailers for "King of Jazz" and "Going Hollywood," Bing's song in "Reaching for the Moon" and "Check and Double Check," and clips from Bing's Mack Sennett shorts. The tape concludes with Bing's rare 1933 Paramount short "Please" in its entirety.

£17

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THE GRAMOPHONE

In earlier editions we have quoted extracts from 'The Gramophone' magazine which had been supplied to us by Trevor Wagstaff. I am pleased to say that Trevor has been continuing his researches and has sent us further extracts mentioning Bing covering the period from 1926 to 1951. There are some very interesting points and the first reference involving Bing was in the December 1927 edition:

> *Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys, three members of his famous band, give us a really entertaining record and one that I advise everyone to buy with 'Sweet L'il, Ain't She Sweet', Mississippi Mud' and 'I Left My Sugar Standing in the Rain'. (HMV B.2562).*

An encouraging start although it sounded as though there were three songs. The October 1928 edition carried contrasting comments. Under the H. M. V. section we see:

> *I am sorry to say that Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys are exceedingly disappointing in 'From Monday On' and 'What Price Lyrics' (B.2779, 3s).*

Whilst on the same page under the Columbia heading there is a far more favourable comment:

> *Incidentally this latter record has the song of the moment 'That's My Weakness Now' on the reverse side. This number is also given us by Paul Whiteman, His Orchestra and Rhythm Boys. The latter also sing 'Wa-da-da (5006). Needless to say both sides are first class.*

It was interesting to read an article about the merits of fibre needles compared with steel needles in the November 1928 issue and having recently heard member James Moore demonstrate both types, I have to say that, to my ear, 78s played on a wind-up gramophone sound better with fibre needles than with the steel variety. Also the fibre type don't wear out the record. The fibre needle debate surfaced again in The Gramophone in January 1935 when it became apparent that steel needles were better on dirty records and that fibre needles were not satisfactory if the records had already been played by steel needles many times. I had not realised how technical it all was with the storage of the fibre needles in a dry and uniform atmosphere being crucial as well. Any of our members like to contribute to the debate? How many of you are still using fibre needles?

Many complimentary reviews of Bing's records were seen in the early thirties and we have already reproduced some of these in recent editions. We must print the following however:

> *And not the least interesting feature of the records is that the singing in four of them - 'Great Day,' 'Without a Song,' 'You Brought a New Kind of Love to Me,' and 'Livin' in the Sunlight' - is by Bing Crosby, possibly the world's greatest rhythm singer. (The Gramophone - October 1930)*

How about that for a comment in 1930! As Bing turned more to ballads and love songs, the reviews became more confused.

> *The backing is Bing Crosby singing 'Can't we talk it over' - one of Bing's sex appeal stunts. Just as well I'm a trousers, for I'm sure I'd fall. (The Gramophone - April, 1932).*

> *Love In Bloom*
> *Straight from the Shoulder (Brunswick 01850)*
> *Crosby's usual crooning, delightful or nauseating, according to your tastes. Mixture as before, with accompaniment by Irving Aaronson's Commanders in the style of a good theatre pit band. (The Gramophone - October 1934).*

> *But Bing's record is a remarkable piece of virtuosity. He sings 'Let Me Call You Sweetheart' as a ballad and then you turn over the record and hear him sing 'Someday, Sweetheart' in a style that is "hotter than hot"; what an artist, but I hope he isn't falling between two stools here and that people who like one side of the record won't be horrified at the other. Still, it's a grand experiment. (Brunswick 01962). (The Gramophone - April 1935).*

By 1935, The Gramophone had a section headed 'Crooners' in which records by the breed were reviewed. Two interesting reviews that year were:

> *Bing Crosby's record of 'It's Easy to Remember' (Brunswick 01993), complete with chorus of angels, will sell without any help from me, but my own preference is for 'Down by the River' on 01995, backed with 'Soon'. 'Down by the River' is a perfect example of microphone art; Crosby's voice has been amplified and made too, too intimate by turns in the past, but here he has taken the microphone into his confidence with immense success. (The Gramophone May 1935)*

> *The king of crooners, Bing Crosby, has made his first record for some time for your pleasure this month; it is of two songs from forthcoming films - at least 'Two for Tonight' has already been seen in the West End. The song he sings from this film is 'Takes Two to Make a Bargain', and for the first time he falls into the trap of letting his sense of rhythm and phrasing run away with him to the detriment of the diction. But it's no wonder when you realise that he has the Dorsey Brothers Orchestra to back him up. By the way, there is no mention of this fact on the label, only in the printed list; this is remarkable as in 'I Wished on*

the Moon' there is more Dorsey Brothers than Bing! The record is little more than a dance record with Bing singing the vocal chorus. But it is all very good and you must make a note of the number, Brunswick 02070." (The Gramophone - October, 1935)

So generally, Bing received favourable comments in the magazine but how about this from January 1936?

"Quite the most remarkable record of the month, however, is Bing Crosby's attempt at 'Adeste Fidelis' and 'Still Night, Holy Night' (Brunswick 02054). If it were not rather pathetic it would be utterly laughable to hear this singer who is acknowledged to be the king of crooners making such an awful and complete mess of these two beautiful airs; all his little tricks are here, but they are so utterly out of place that instead of being fascinating, they are merely irritating and in bad taste. No, we prefer Bing in the sort of thing he can do well, such as 'On Treasure Island', 'Take Me Back to my Boots and Saddle' (02100) and 'Red Sails in the Sunset', or the reissued 'Star Dust' on 02101."

Well, it's only his opinion! By March 1936 Bing was in favour again as the reviewer considered the songs from the film of 'Anything Goes'.

"Bing sings all three with ease and assurance and all those little tricks that every crooner since he first burst upon an unsuspecting world has tried to copy and, for the most part, lamentably failed. There is nothing he doesn't know about putting over these sentimental little ditties of our degenerate generation. That they die and are forgotten in the briefest moment of time is of no account; the singer does the job in hand superbly, and as such justifies the enormous salary he receives from the hard-headed magnates of the American film industry. (N.B. The numbers of these epoch-making works of art are Brunswick 02143 and 02144)."

The October 1937 edition carried a long review of the book 'Bing' by Ted and Larry Crosby and very favourable it was too. The record reviews continued to be complimentary as well as evidenced by this one from November 1938:

"It is doubtful whether a more satisfying vocal record of 'Now It Can Be Told' will be heard than Brunswick 02646. One Bing Crosby is responsible for it. Yes, the same fellow who never fails to intrigue us month after month. The coupling' 'When You Dream About Hawaii' is almost of the 'Sweet Leilani' standard and that is praise enough."

On to 1939 for an another example of what the world thought about Bing.

"Bing Crosby also sings 'Sweethearts' on Brunswick 02761. Here it is coupled with 'Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life'. These suit my temperament even better; what a depth and range the man has. These you must not miss...." (The Gramophone - July 1939)

So far, I have mainly mentioned Bing's issues on Brunswick but in October 1938, Columbia started putting out Bing's earlier records although the reviewers did not always seem to realise that the songs had been recorded some years before. Witness this comment from February 1940.

"Bing Crosby has recorded 'You're Getting to be a Habit With Me' and 'You've Got Me Crying Again' on Col. DB1901."

Seems amazing now that the difference in the voice wasn't noticed. These Columbia reissues continued into the war years and in November 1941 we read:

"Crosby himself records 'She Reminds Me of You' and 'Straight From The Shoulder', and proves that he is still the ace crooner (Columbia DB2049)."

By 1942, the light was starting to dawn on the reviewers.

"I found Bing Crosby's recording of 'We'll Make Hay While The Sun Shines' and 'Waltzing in a Dream' most enjoyable, despite the somewhat poor recording. These are obviously early Bing pressings and there are many who feel that these are much more acceptable than his more recent discs (Columbia DB2074). If you agree or disagree with these sentiments, you will find his other recording interesting for comparison. This comprises 'Shepherd Serenade' and 'Do You Care?' and are excellent examples of the modern Crosby (Brunswick 03278)." (The Gramophone - March, 1942).

The reviews were more mixed as the 1940s unfurled:-

"I almost failed to recognise Bing Crosby in 'It Makes No Difference Now', only the slight throb served to distinguish him from any one of a hundred crooners. 'I'm Thinking Tonight of My Blue Eyes' was more characteristic but poor material. (Brunswick 03456)." (The Gramophone - August 1943).

"Admirers of Bing Crosby are well served this month for there are two discs bearing his name; the first features him as we all remember him of old, singing sentimental ballads almost to himself, 'Starlight' and 'I Guess It Had To Be That Way' are the titles and these in themselves carry sufficient explanation of the contents. (Col. DB2137). In complete contrast are the second pair in which Bing has the able assistance of the Andrews Sisters while singing 'Pistol Packin' Mama', and the well known 'Vict'ry Polka'. I felt in the case of the last pair that the team work was not all that it might have been and I would have preferred that either Bing or the Sisters had been absent so that one had not detracted from

the other. Nevertheless Brunswick 03494 will appeal to many. (The Gramophone - April 1944).

Well he was right about one thing. Brunswick 03494 did appeal to many and in fact sold over a million copies! It reached number two in the Billboard charts in the USA as well. Yet despite this, the reviewer still had his doubts judging from the following:

"Bing Crosby's presentation of 'Long Ago' is by far the best that I have yet heard, and despite my previous somewhat critical remarks regarding this tune I must admit that I found this very enjoyable. 'Is You Is Or Is You Ain't Ma Baby?' on the other side includes assistance from the Andrews Sisters and as on previous occasions I did not think the combination too effective (Brunswick 03539)." (The Gramophone - December 1944).

The July 1945 edition carried a full page article about Bing and gave the estimate that "75 million of the discs containing numbers by this Caruso of crooning have found their way into homes in all parts of the world." Bing was generally well appreciated by The Gramophone staff although they did not shirk from being critical if appropriate.

"Easily the best of the four numbers given by Bing Crosby this month is 'I Can't Begin To Tell You' from the film 'The Dolly Sisters' in which he is supported most ably by the orchestra of Carmen Cavallaro which is perhaps best known for the brilliant playing of its leader. Here he combines with Bing to make a really effective recording. On the other side, we have Bing singing 'Symphony', but here the orchestra is that of Victor Young and although the style of playing is quite different, it is almost equally effective (Brunswick 03624). On his second disc, Bing couples 'We'll Gather Lilacs' from 'Perchance to Dream' with 'Beautiful Love'. The former I found disappointing - perhaps I expected too much of Bing. The latter is much the better of the two and well up to standard and also includes some very fine violin work from Eudice Shapiro (Brunswick 03633). (The Gramophone - July 1946).

The forties rolled by and Bing's records continued to appear. By May, 1948, The Gramophone was commenting thus:

"No review of vocal recordings would be complete without reference to Bing Crosby, whose popularity seems quite ageless. 'Ave Maria', sung with choir and orchestra, is a good example of the reasons for his universal appeal, and to back it up 'Lullaby' - Brahms' Cradle Song, helps to make a pair of outstanding merit (Brunswick 03874)."

A nice review of various Bing records in the December, 1949 edition finished with comments with which I can only agree:

"...but the reverse of the latter is quite the worst Bing I've ever heard. It's 'Be-Bop Spoken Here' and Bing and Patty Andrews bop-talk their way through one of the most inane ditties of all time. The singers may find it "easy on the ear" as they themselves assert, but I don't, and I think few Bing fans will."

Trevor Wagstaff's extracts stop in November 1951 and to complete our look at references to Bing in The Gramophone, here are a few tit-bits.

"Bing Crosby, who nowadays affects a glissando of which I don't approve, has four new songs...." (The Gramophone - March 1950).

"Happily, there are some fine records by Bing Crosby, mainly of the 1940-1942 vintage, now available for the first time in England. Some consider this was Bing's peak period; certainly the records are excellent listening and I cannot single any one out." (The Gramophone - August 1951).

"Then there is Bing Crosby 'Gone Fishin' with Louis Armstrong. This is gentle humour, all too rare these days, and there is a fine family affair between Bing and his son Gary on the other side, a modernised 'Moonlight Bay' (Bruns. 04781)." (The Gramophone - November 1951)

Trevor will no doubt be sending me further extracts from The Gramophone as he works his way through the 1950s and possibly these will include references to the "new long-playing records." The July 1950 edition carried a technical report which delved into the recording characteristics of the new discs as compared to 78s. The reviewer, G. Howard-Sorrell, felt that "I have not yet heard any reproduction that reaches the standard set by the best of the older system, the surface noise is much lower and the treble is all right, but to my ear the reproduction seems rather hollow and lacking in body." But he finished more positively by saying "they have a big future and we shall all eventually use them, whether to the exclusion of 78s I hesitate to say." I know what he means when he writes about the sound as compared to 78s and he was certainly right about their big future. Our thanks to Trevor Wagstaff for some fascinating glimpses of the past.

Malcolm Macfarlane

BOOKS 'N' BING

1. THE CROSBY COLLECTION - 1926 1977
PART FIVE 1961 - 1977. A REVIEW OF THE COMMERCIAL RECORDINGS MADE BY BING CROSBY.
By FRED REYNOLDS.

From the pen of this versatile and knowledgeable writer we now have Part 5, the concluding part of this colossal venture. A daunting project by any standard, specially when you consider the wealth of information over and above a mere listing of titles that is chronicled with each and every entry. A moment's contemplation to absorb these ten pieces of information, as briefly listed under PRESENTATION on page 1, coupled with the all important MAIN APPENDIX AND INDEXES from Page 253 to Page 358, will surely reveal this as being the most comprehensive reference library of Bing Crosby's commercial recordings ever to be published. Possibly covered by OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION is the frequent and hitherto unattempted inclusion of other singers who performed the song and sometimes a comparison with Bing's version.

Concerning the - REVIEW - of each title, at the same time as this is the only aspect in this unique presentation that is not hidebound by statistical and factual data, and in consequence 'lives' by virtue of being only one person's opinion, we must keep in mind that people's opinions can differ, specially in the world of music. Yet we must all agree that Fred's analyses are straight from the shoulder - he pulls no punches but speaks his own mind and portrays his own feelings and in so doing, clearly states the reasoning behind his remarks. Actually, it's an interesting exercise to compare our own reactions to those of his.

An excellent feature of this most comprehensive dissertation aimed primarily at Bing's commercial recordings, is the leader, heading up each year's performances and giving us a condensed history of that year as related to Bing's activities, friends and relations which, in itself could be called an abridged version of THE LIFE AND TIMES OF BING CROSBY.

In this final edition the APPENDIX AND INDEXES, previously briefly referred to above, occupy nearly one third of the book. This is because the listings are cumulative including those in the previous four parts thus avoiding reference to all five parts in order to locate an entry. Furthermore, an index not previously included is the INDEX OF MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENTS accounting for a further 6 pages.

In summation, this five part treatise is unique. We may be assured that no commercial enterprise could have attempted this in-depth investigation and portrayal of the subject matter. Only a completely dedicated collector devoting his entire life could ever approach such perfection. Surely, this will prove to be everybody's Bing Crosby Bible. As a collector yourself, can you manage without it ?

Colin Pugh

Editor: Fred's incredible series is indeed an indispensable reference source and I guess that the project virtually took over his life for a number of years. Can I add our sincere thanks to you Fred for this unique work. Another to send her thanks to Fred was Mary Frances Crosby who wrote:

Dear Fred

Thank you - the amount of time and energy you put into researching Dad is incredible. I found your work fascinating. Hope 1997 is a joyous and creative one for you and again many thanks for 'The Crosby Collection'.

Mary Crosby

Great stuff! Let me continue with our look at the new books.

2. Road to Box Office - The Seven Film Comedies of Crosby, Hope and Lamour.

Written by Randall G. Mielke, this book is an in-depth review of the 'Road' films. Mr. Mielke fell in love with the 'Road' films as a child in the 1950s and '60s and was surprised that no detailed examination of the films had been published. So he set to work and this book is the result. It's a nice book and whilst it probably does not tell us Crosby veterans much that is new, it is a first class description of the films including story, cast and production crew. A brief introduction leads into chapters describing how Bing, Bob and Dottie met and how the 'Road' films came about. There is a chapter covering each film and one about a proposed final Road film which did not get made. The author then gives an overview of the series before separate chapters reviewing the individual film careers of Crosby, Hope and Lamour complete the book.

I enjoyed reading this book as it reminded me of particular highlights of the films and as an example let me quote the one we all remember:

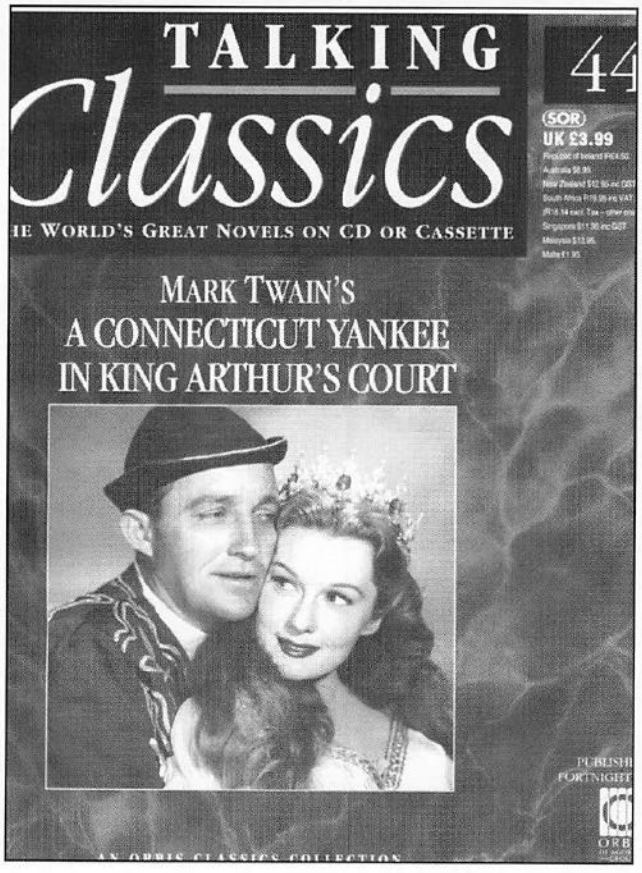
Mel Frank was responsible for a 'Utopia' line which became a movie classic. In 'Road to Utopia', Hope and Crosby had to act tough to impress the local bad guys. They saunter up to a bar in the mining town, and the local heavy asks, "What'll you have?" "Oh, a couple of fingers of rotgut," growls Crosby. "What's yours?" asks Douglass Dumbrille. "I'll take a lemonade," squeaks Hope in a high-pitched voice before responding to a nudge by Crosby and snarling, "in a dirty glass."

The book is in A5 size and it has 171 pages with twenty

photographs. Published by McFarland & Co., Inc, Box 611, Jefferson NC 28640, USA, it sells for $34.50 ($37.50 post-paid in the USA). Overseas orders should be accompanied by a cheque in US funds from a New York bank and $5 should be added for shipping. The publishers are those who issued Tim Morgereth's tome 'Bing Crosby' and like that book, 'Road to Box Office' is a very professionally finished product in a hard blue cover. A good addition to a Crosby library although I suspect that the price will deter some potential purchasers. Incidentally, the author is the public information co-ordinator for the Indian Prairie Library in Willowbrook, Illinois.

3. Golf Journal January / February 1997 edition - this contains a three page article about the Bing Crosby Pro-am Golf Tournament and includes four photos of Bing plus a photo of Bing on the back cover. They were photographs I hadn't seen before and Charles Baillie kindly provided a copy of the magazine for our archives. Golf Journal is published by the United States Golf Association, P.O. Box 708, Far Hills, New Jersey 07931-0708, USA. Phone (908) 234-2300 - Fax (908) 781-1112 - e-mail golfjournal@usga.org. Individual copies of the magazine can be obtained by forwarding $2 for shipping and handling to the above address.

4. Talking Classics No. 44. This edition of this fortnightly magazine was published in late 1995 but we have only just become aware of it thanks to Barry Whittingham. The magazine covers 'The World's Great Novels on CD or Cassette' and the front cover of number 44 shows Bing and Rhonda Fleming in a scene from 'A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court'. Back copies may still be available from Orbis Publishing, Griffin House, 161 Hammersmith Rd., London W6 8SD (Phone 0990 673331). The price for number 44 was £3.99 which includes a cassette (non Bing) but I managed to obtain a copy of the actual magazine for nothing.



5. Yours May 1997 edition. This UK published magazine is aimed at the older generation, or the young-at-heart as the magazine describes its membership. There is a nice two page article about Bing by Allan Warburton with three accompanying photographs. I like the quote "Bing's career was the most successful in the history of the entertainment business." Details of the ICC were given and as a result we have gained several new members. Stan White has been in correspondence with Allan Warburton and has thanked him for his article, sentiments which we heartily echo. We understand that Mr. Warburton is following up with an article about Leslie Gaylor and we should have more details in our next issue.

One Sweet Letter From You

Members' views, opinions and comments are always welcomed and we have great pleasure in reproducing some of the letters received since the last issue

Stan White, 57 Stanley Street, Rothwell, Kettering, Northants NN14 6EA

A million thanks to Mervyn Thomas for making available to you the feature about John Scott Trotter by Chandler Harris. Alan Dell, Leslie Gaylor, Paul Barnes and myself, and others, have tried for years to get for Trotter the recognition he deserves for the hard work he put in to making sure that his backing band for Bing employed the very best musicians available, and for supplying them with superb arrangements, especially for the radio shows, where John Scott was able to keep the backing right up to date with the latest trends in popular music which gave a lift to the singing of Bing, and his guest artistes.

It has to be said that John Scott Trotter could not always do as he wished in the Decca record studios, when Jack Kapp would insist on the band being kept in the background in order to highlight Bing. Jack was a bit old-fashioned in that outlook although it has to be said that he was a wise old soul for choosing songs which became hits for Bing, and for the many others who recorded for

Decca. It is a fact that Trotter was able to provide far better backings for Bing on radio. What a pity it is that out of all the songs that have been extracted for CD release from the radio shows featuring Bing and other singers, that nobody has yet released the well arranged tunes which just feature the John Scott Trotter Orchestra which covered light music to real swingers. Perhaps one day?

Rather like the feature you put together about the career and music of Buddy Cole, it is wonderful to have this great article about the career of John Scott Trotter. Incidentally, my comment about JST retiring in 1954, in my last letter, was purely in connection with his work for Bing, and as I said in my recent radio chat with John Richards, John Scott did return to do some TV work for Bing in the 1960s. It is good to see him getting the limelight he deserves.

It is impossible to mention every contribution whether letters or articles, I did find both features by Ken Barnes of tremendous interest, and I must mention Bert Bishop's "Bing On The Box" especially the radio notes, which he pieces together in such an interesting way, from the many radio shots he is sent. Another excellent feature is Keith Parkinson's Celluloid Crosby in which he puts some detail to those 1940s films which had brief glimpses of dozens of Hollywood Stars, this answered a few questions for me, but brings forward a few more. In which one did Roy Rogers sing, 'Deep Purple', and which one was it that had Bing hold out his hand to shake hands, but walk past the star of the film to greet someone else?

So Gary Giddins no less, has joined the avalanche of readers who condemn the organ accompaniment which Buddy Cole gave to Bing, when he was speaking in the Autobiography set. I presume he extends that to the actual songs although he does not say so. In my opinion Buddy Cole was able to give Bing a better organ accompaniment on the re-make of 'Goldmine In The Sky' than Eddie Dunstedter did on that first commercial model Hammond Organ. It is not so much the playing as the better toned Hammond which Buddy was using, which was probably a Hammond C3, and the better recording quality, even so, as Bing himself said, "'Goldmine In The Sky' was a hit with Dunstedter."

I was recently asked to choose some songs for a forthcoming CD, and I did suggest, "When Mother Nature Sings Her Lullaby" and "Little Lady Make Believe" which Bing recorded with Eddie Dunstedter backing him on the Wurlitzer Pipe Organ of the Warner Brothers Sound Stage Studio. Apart from thinking they am wonderful recordings, I know that out in the wide world beyond the bounds of the ICC, many enthusiasts in the membership of The Theatre Organ Club, and The Cinema Organ Society, have complained for years about these two songs with Bing and Dunstedter, not being available on a well known album label which they could purchase from shops. So this was an opportunity to reach a much wider and specific core of recordbuyers who would purchase the CD, indeed, the presenter of the BBC Radio 2 programme, 'The Organist Entertains', Nigel Ogden, has promised to broadcast these songs if they do appear on the CD. Nigel is very enthusiastic for Bing, and has many of his records, he will often mention Bing in his programmes when a tune associated with Bing is played by one of the organists in his programmes and Nigel himself included quite a long medley of Bing tunes, on a CD he made on the large Wurlitzer in the Manchester Free Trades Ball.

However, I now wonder whether the hostility which exists against the organ backings given to Bing by Helen Crawford, Eddie Dunstedter, Ethel Smith and Buddy Cole, from ICC members will filter through to the record company and stop the Dunstedter tracks being used ?

It was interesting to read Count Basie's views concerning his 1972 recording sessions when he backed Bing for a whole album. He seemed to be saying that Bing was not comfortable working with him, in the same way as he was when working with Louis Armstrong. I can only agree with Count Basie, the album as a whole is not bad, and some of the Basie musicians worked well with Bing, such as trombonist Al Grey, but the band clumped along like someone was laying down the beat with a sledgehammer. Bing would have worked better with Woody Herman, Harry James, or other Big Bands which were still around at that time. The Basie band was never a favourite of mine, and if someone complains about his organ playing, then I would have to agree, he left a lot to be desired.

Thanks for a great magazine.

Les Brice, 40 Crown Rd., Clacton on Sea, Essex CO15 1AT

I thought that I would drop you a line to say how great the latest BING was, (aren't they all??) and how much I learn every time I read one.

Gary Giddin's letter brought me up short, as I too always believed that Bing actually did the song couplings as he went along. Back in the mid 50's when the autobiography was first issued it was always stated in the reviews that the Master did just that, and later I read that somehow he had omitted one such coupling and Buddy Cole plus a sound recordist caught up with him at a golf game, and Bing added the missing few words. If I was the only person to have believed this, I must say that I feel rather stupid, and I am grateful after all these years to have learned the truth, not that it will matter. I will still picture Bing with his baseball cap on his head, his pipe in his hand, leaning against his music stand and ad libbing all those seemingly throwaway couplings. I do hope sincerely though that Gary doesn't soon tell us that it was actually Michael Holliday singing the songs and that Bing was out playing golf! Seriously though there is no doubt that Gary is a very learned man, in the area of Crosby. How lucky we all are that our select group has such men as he and all the others who contribute to the pages of BING.

I am enclosing a couple of mementos that you may like to have, one of them, my first membership card. What a

different world it was then! The editor whose name I can't recall at this moment, was always accusing the members of apathy and no one seemed bothered enough to write in. He did what in the modern parlance is called 'a runner' abandoning the club completely and forcing Frank Murphy to grab back the reins. I passed all of my old club mags to the late Jim Lowe, who I believe passed them on to you so you must have some idea what a shambles it was then. That poor editor would have given his right arm for one of the team that the mag has nowadays.

OFFICIAL MEMBERSHIP CARD

this certifies that

Ma LESLIE BRICE

is a member of the

BRITISH BING CROSBY SOCIETY

from APRIL 1961 to APRIL 1962

Active President. Active Vice President.

Another thing about that period, now so long ago, was that there were never any Bing recordings to write about, and in these days Bing was still a major force in the music world. I doubt the old Crosby Society would have survived the amount of material now being released I remember that there was an Irish company that we the members dealt with, called T.A.R.A. if we wanted any American Records. I got many LPs through them.

I have just written to Jim Reilly thanking him for the latest in the 'Harry Lillis' saga. What marvellous discs these are. I mentioned to him that I had just bought a 'BLUE SPOT' stereogram, the real Rolls Royce of grams, at the time "How The West Was Won" was released, and how I sat transfixed to hear the opening words, and to hear the old Master launch into 'Shenandoah.' I sat in a room full of sound with Bing's voice blasting out in the middle, a never to be forgotten moment. The whole two CDs are fantastic, both sound better that the original albums, and the way the "Scarlet Pimpernel" who is behind these recordings, has worked all the various songs together is truly magnificent.

I did begin to fret slightly when by mid May the Spring BING had failed to materialise but all came right in the end. I shall be more patient next time, but goodness knows what I would do should one ever fail to arrive!!! Anyway I have held you up too much, so I will call a halt. My truly grateful thanks to you and to all the team who bring us this fantastic mag.
(Editor: The mention of how Les first heard 'How The West Was Won' reminded me vividly of my own experience. In my case, it was 1966 and I had just passed all my banking exams, receiving a 100 gratuity. I spent this on a Ferguson stereogram and the 'How The West Was Won' LP. Like Les, the stereo effect was amazing to me and I can remember lying on the floor with my head between the two speakers listening to the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in awe. I even got my father-in-law to lie on the floor as well! Memories!)

Greg Van Beek, 929 Hillcrest St., West Bend, WI 53095, USA

I was very pleased to receive the Spring issue of BING and I read it cover to cover in one sitting! I just can't seem to put it down once it arrives! Always a first-class publication, and always must interesting and informative.

I noted with great interest the "unknown Bing films" you discovered whilst going through old issues of Variety magazine. I believe I have clips of one of them in my collection, namely the special trailer for Christmas Seals from 1943. In December, 1989, the DISCOVERY channel on our cable TV offered a program of Yuletide fair, of which the title escapes me. It was hosted by Rosemary Clooney, and was a mixture of old film clips depicting Christmas through the years. I video recorded several snippets from the show, including clips from a short or trailer entitled "Now About Christmas." Until now, I had no idea as to the origin of this film. After the title, "Now About Christmas" appears against the backdrop of a snowy scene looking out a window, Bing appears inside in front of a large Christmas tree. Between Bing and the tree is a grand piano, on which numerous gaily wrapped Christmas packages are placed. Bing is looking through the packages, picks one up, and looks at the tag attached. Bing reads the tag "from Bob Hope", and remarks "isn't that nice!" "Certainly a thoughtful lad with all he has to do." Bing then shakes the box and it makes a loud rattling sound. He shakes his head and says, "every year another yo-yo!" After which, he throws the package back onto the piano.

Bing now gets serious and says, "It's a great thing, though, Christmas. For most of us, it's the happiest time of the year. But everybody isn't so lucky. You know, there's lots of folks facing an enemy right here at home An enemy they can't handle like our boys in uniform handle the Nazis and the Japs. It threatens us everywhere and always with a sneak attack." Bing then pulls an envelope from his suit coat pocket and says, "By this time you must have received this letter, containing your Tuberculosis Association Christmas Seals." The clip abruptly ends here and switches to another, non-Bing Christmas piece of film. Later in the program, another "teaser" from this rare gem is aired, as Rosemary Clooney mentions the film 'Holiday Inn'. In this scene, Bing is shown kneeling down by the Christmas tree looking at still more packages. He rises from the tree and it's evident he's singing a song (perhaps 'White Christmas' or 'Silent Night'), but the clip has no audio, as Rosie is doing her narration, so it's impossible to tell exactly what is being sung. I certainly wish I could find the whole trailer! I've been searching for info on it for 8 years now, but to no avail. Perhaps Keith Parkinson knows more on this??

Amongst the items Gwen Harvey sent you in the "Other Video bits & pieces" column, you make note of the "very

rare piece of film which appears to be from the Cocoanut Grove, circa 1930." Bing is seen with a moustache along with Frank McHugh and Charles Butterworth singing a song dressed as women. This same clip, along with MANY other rarities, is contained in Ron Hall's fine new video, "Bing Crosby's Road to Hollywood".

Another of our Cable TV channels, the American Movie Classics (AMC) channel occasionally shows some old Paramount newsreels from the 40's and 50's as fillers between movies. Some of these contain some more unknown clips of Bing. I have one on tape from 1949 entitled "Fans Again Pick Crosby". Bing is presented the Photoplay award along with Ingrid Bergman. He makes a brief 'Thank you' speech. Another one I have is entitled "Crosby, Hope Tee Off With Capitol 'Brass'." It is also from 1949 and shows Bing and Bob playing in a golf match. There are several others I've seen, but was not at the VCR to be able to tape them. You never know when they will pop up, as they aren't scheduled in advance. Another I missed was from 1950 when Bing was in Virginia for the premiere of 'Riding High'. It shows Bing engaged in a square dance! I also missed one from the premiere of 'Emperor Waltz' with many stars giving their praise to the film and Bing. Eddie Cantor even sang part of "Where the Blue"! If anyone has done any research on these newsreel shorts, it would be very interesting indeed to learn what other rare Bing treats are contained in them

One last thing of note I caught on the box was on a channel showing some old TV commercials. There was Bing and family outdoors camping with Bing flipping flapjacks over a griddle! The rest of the family was drinking, what else, but Minute Maid! It was only 30 seconds long, but it was my first taste of the infamous MM commercials. It was in colour from around 1970, judging by the size of the children.

It's difficult to do, but if had to choose a favourite article, it would have to be Ken Barnes' comments on his experiences with Bing. The albums he did with Bing are among my top favorites, and I'm very much looking forward to the upcoming releases Jim Reilly discussed "from his crystal ball". One question I have for Ken is would it be possible to include the little 38 second long version of 'White Christmas' Bing recorded separately in 1976 for inclusion in "the Crosby Medley" on the upcoming London Palladium CD? I know at the time MCA wouldn't allow it, but maybe after 20 years "the heat is off"!

Not to start a debate or anything. but I've found just the opposite of David Currington's observations on the United Artist versus Polydor recording techniques. I feel the Polydor recording of "Seasons" has a much clearer sound than say "That's What Life Is All About", which to my ears always sounds somewhat muffled as compared to the "Seasons" LP. One theory I've heard on this is that the spacing of the grooves on a record can affect the quality of reproduction. If there are more tracks on an album, the grooves must be closer together to attain the maximum playing time, as opposed to when there are fewer tracks, the grooves can be spread out more, giving a clearer sound. I'm not a technical wizard, but it seems I've read this in more than one publication. As far as Bing's voice goes, my opinion is that on some of the cuts recorded in February 1975, Bing is somewhat hoarse. To me, this is particularly evident on the cut "I'll Never Fall in Love Again". For the "Seasons" sessions, Bing's voice sounds clear as a bell. When Bing hits that booming low note in "September Song" after the bridge (AND these few precious days) the floor actually vibrates! And I was astonished at how well he was singing on that album. "June is Bustin' Out All Over" and "Autumn in New York" sound as if they could have been recorded 25 years earlier! Even Ken noted in his liner notes that Bing seemed more inspired during these sessions. One listen to the album and it's quite apparent how wonderful it would've been if Bing could've recorded the other songs Ken suggested for the album, like "Sleigh Ride In July", "Let's Start the New Year Right", etc. I do hope Ken will be able to issue the "Seasons" album on CD as well as the UA material.

I would also like to ask Ken if he could list some of the other songs he had planned for the proposed duet album with Bob Hope, "Straight Down the Middle". I read that he was to have met with Bing and Bob in Los Angeles the week of October 16, 1977 but we all know the circumstances which prevented this from happening.

Guess I went on long enough! I trust you are well, Malcolm. I wish you and the rest of the club management my very best.
(Editor: A fascinating letter from Greg and the information on the Christmas Seals trailer is very useful indeed. By coincidence, I saw the Minute Maid commercial as well during my recent visit to the USA and as you will read, Roger Osterholm managed to video the golf tournament news report for posterity. We could do with more data on Bing's newsreel appearances and members contributions would be welcome.)

Jim Newell, 17 Edwina Close, Bitterne, Southampton, Hants SO19 7BJ

Maybe, just maybe I'm looking through rose coloured glasses (and I do wear glasses) but I think the BING mag has come a long way, not just in years but in quality, being ever mindful of those early years and our grateful thanks to those editors who did just about every thing on a shoe string, never too sure which way things would go and whether people would appreciate what they were trying to do. The answer is the mag that we have now. To all, our most grateful thanks.

Now...on to what may be a controversial point. Like Leslie Gaylor, I read the mag more than once in the first week it arrives as I take in more the second/third time around. Nothing wrong so far, wait for it...CDs are the dodgy bit. My work at times a few years ago used to take me to Southampton University and one day I got to talking about music to one of the Professors in the science labs and he warned me about building up a collection on CDs if I intended to keep them over a period of many

years. Why? Because sometimes even after a short time, but most certainly over a long period, they would not play properly and in some cases not at all because of the holes/gaps that would be on the disk caused by the manufacturing process. Within the last few weeks I read an article which discussed this very thing.

This brings me to a list of things which I would like to hear members thoughts on. If, and I say if, you have been collecting over many years, most if not all the material that is out on CD will be on your records. I do know the bit about better quality on CD, I have some CDs of Bing where the quality is better on the record. I do understand that the trade has to cater for the "newer fella" but why can't the trade mix in some of the material that maybe lots of people have never heard, for example some of the songs from the radio shows or better still some complete shows. (I know that they have a done a very few). I have on tape some shows that are from the 1930s through to the latter years and these would make some wonderful CDs as they had guests from films/radio/stage etc. and for the younger listener this would bring the famous to life in a very real sense.

I have records which were made in the late 1920s and can still be played today, but with the rapid change of technology today you buy a system and as you buy it off the shelf, it's out of date and the new one is on its way. I am thinking of CDs because there is a new size of disk on its way both for Hi Fi CDs and for computers. My 78s, my 10" LPs and of course my 12" LPs can still be played. Open reel tapes can still be used and played and of course transferred to cassette.

Some of us who like collecting Bing are getting on a bit (I'll speak for myself as I am) and where will all this wonderful material go? Will anyone care? The reason for the last question was brought about by my thoughts regarding the several series of programmes, some of which ran into 35/40 one hour shows, both in the USA and 'Down Under'. Apart from really nice Bing songs, they were full of World history, so much so I believe one series was used in a USA University as a history teaching programme. As a final thought, how about the trade making a set of these available on CD?

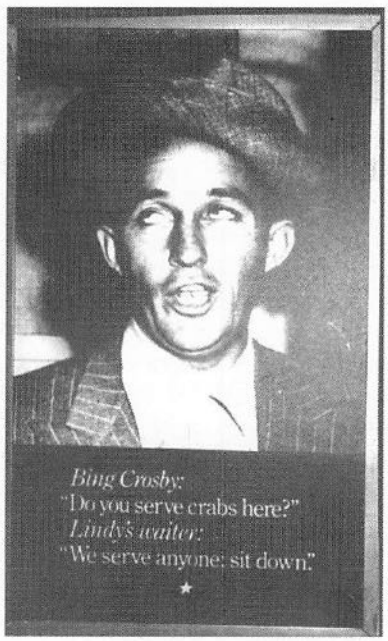
Thank you for taking the time to read this and I would be very pleased to read your thoughts on any or all of the above points.
(Editor: Jim may be referring to the radio series 'Fifty Fabulous Years' and 'The Crosby Years'. Both sets of programmes have recently been donated to us by Ted Burnell and please see Trading Post for an opportunity to buy these.)

Mrs. J. R. Rawlings, 11 Bramshott Close, Allington Park, Maidstone, Kent ME16 0RX

I was very interested to see the details of the Bing Crosby Fan Club in May's issue of 'Yours'. I was a member many years ago, 1940/41 to be precise, and three other members wrote to me, two soldiers and an airman. I corresponded with them for some time and eventually met and married the airman! All because of Bing Crosby. We were married for 42 years until my husband died in 1987. I have a number of old 78 records of Bing singing and last Christmas my daughter gave me two tapes also, so I'm still a fan. I just thought you might be interested in an old member's thoughts.
(Editor: What a nice letter. We have replied accordingly and we hope Mrs. Rawlings decides to rejoin us. We won't ask for the back subscriptions!)

Francis X Smith, Westbury, New York

I have just received #115 of BING - as usual, it is great and I enjoy reading every page....The enclosed photo hung on the wall of the famous Lindy's Restaurant in New York and members may be interested to see this.



(Editor: Nice to hear from Frank Smith again and I can well imagine that Bing would have had a laugh about the photo when he visited Lindy's.)

George Patmore, 53 Severn Way, Cressage, Shropshire SY5 6DS

In the Spring edition of BING, Keith Parkinson's 'A-Z' covered Oliver Hardy. I have recently finished reading 'Babe, the life of Oliver Hardy' by John McCabe, published in 1989 by Robson Books Ltd. of London. I was intrigued to learn from the biography that 'Babe' (or 'Ollie' as we L & H fans knew him) joined the Lakeside Golf Club in 1931, the same year as Bing. They became great friends and golfing partners and both became golfers of a professional standard. The book states that they were both "cut from the same bolt of cloth, possessing the interesting mix of genuine loner and hearty bon vivant. Crosby admired Babe's singing voice for its purity, and while golfing would sing duets with him, picking old, near forgotten songs." The photographs in the book include a portrait photo of Bing c.1932 - autographed and captioned as "A treasured Hardy photograph, inscribed to

him by 'pal' Bing Crosby."

A few snippets.
14 April, 1997 BBC1 TV 10:30 p.m. - 11:20 p.m. A programme called "Ten Pound Poms" about the assisted passage scheme for Australian immigrants ex UK in the 1950s. Bing was strongly featured with his recordings of 'Don't Fence Me In' and 'Now is the Hour'.
16 April, 1997 Daily Telegraph crossword puzzle clue for 7 down: "A crooner confronts fellow in Oxfordshire (8 letters). Answer: Abingdon.
26 April, 1997 BBC TV. Hitchcock's film 'Rear Window' (1954) with full length track of Bing singing 'To See You Is To Love You' as a background to one scene.
5 May, 1997 ITV Granada. Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau in the film 'Grumpy Old Men'. In a Christmas scene, Bing can be heard singing 'Winter Wonderland'.
(Editor: Thanks, George. He doesn't miss much, does he? Amazing how Bing crops up all over the place.)

Jim Kukura, 115 Mohawk Trail, Indian Mills, New Jersey 08088-8943, USA

First, let me say that I am enjoying my International Crosby Circle membership immensely. After 3+ years of membership, I am still as thrilled as the day my first BING magazine arrived.

I would suggest that in allowing a controversy about whether we should allow controversy, we in effect sealed our fate. But such controversy can take various forms. We can have controversy about our tastes, our likes and dislikes. Was Bing's voice at its best in the 30s or the 40s? Is a particular recording or film by Bing, good, or not so good? Or even, is Bing the greatest vocalist ever, or is it someone else, Sinatra for example. These are all matters of personal taste, and there is no wrong answer. Certainly, a particular recording can be almost universally acclaimed as an all-time great, but would still be a matter of individual choice, even if millions make the same choice.

There could also be controversy about the facts. In some cases the truth might be difficult, if not impossible, to dispute. In other cases, the absolute truth may prove to elude our grasp forever. As a case in point for the former, that Bing had more American chart singles than any other artist, is a documented fact that I cannot see anyone disproving. As a case in point for the latter, the why and how of the break-up of the Rhythm Boys has seen a wide variety of explanations over the years, including Bing's While there is an actual truth out there somewhere, the motivation of a person's actions are often too complicated for even that person to fully understand, much less explain. At times, a person looking from afar might comprehend an action better, but who is to say?

So, allow controversy, why not? But let us keep in mind how fragile the truth is, when in fact there is a truth to seek. And opinions of taste are the equal dominion of all, not to be construed as a dismissal of likes and dislikes of others. Unlike Ken Barnes, but like our illustrious editor, I too feel that 'Have I Told You Lately That I Love You' (up to #24 on the U. S. charts) and 'Forsaking All Others' are excellent songs and musical vehicles for both Bing and the Andrews Sisters. And I do not agree with the Ken Barnes designation of second rate for 'Sparrow In The Treetop', which went up to the #8 U. S. chart position, the same as the Guy Mitchell version. In the "I'm not so crazy about it category", I would vote for 'Good, Good, Good' and 'Happy Happy Happy Wedding Day'. In fact, when I listen to the CD, I can almost see Bing wincing when playfully singing 'Good Good Good', knowing full well that the song was never going to get on to the charts. And as the Count himself was quoted as saying in BING #115, I agree that the 'Bing 'N' Basie' album was not a good showcase of Bing's vocal or interpretative musical talents.

In older issues of BING, I've seen less than complimentary remarks about Bing's Sing-a-long albums, most of which I thoroughly enjoy. Where else can you hear Bing get as low as he does on the final note of 'Asleep in the Deep'? Being of half Irish heritage, I really enjoy the many Irish songs included in the Sing-a-longs. And I'm really partial to the refreshingly off-beat 'Abdul A Bulbul Amir'. I'll admit that 'The Bear Went Over The Mountain' doesn't stir my musical appetite much, but most of it is great listening for me, even the tracks that Bing does not participate in. I hear a talented chorus, singing mostly established standards, with great arrangements (my opinion). I really hope the unissued Sing-a-longs get released someday soon.

But, good, bad, or indifferent, I'm a Bing Crosby fan all the way. Regardless of my personal opinion of any of Bing's artistic efforts, it is my current ambition to own every commercial recording of his career. My calculations show me at 1,292 out of a possible 2,330, of which some 110 are unissued. I'm sure I have a long way to go to catch up with many of my fellow ICC members. When progress on that goal gets difficult, I'll probably expand my quest to all the available radio material, which I now only collect incidentally, but find very enjoyable. I also tape from TV Crosby films, specials, etc.

I guess I'll wind up my dissertation here. As a relative newcomer, I don't want to be too presumptuous my first time into the controversy arena. But I have rather enjoyed expressing myself this way, and I think there will be other "sweet letters" from me in the future.
(Editor: Some very well made points by Jim and I'll be on his side forever now that he has called me 'illustrious'. We look forward to his future contributions)

LIONEL'S LINES

"DEATH IN THE AFTERNOON"

Inappropriate though it might seem for a Summer issue, may I return to last Winter, when I was struck by an unknown but deadly virus which succeeded in defying the finest medical brains that this country has to offer. My own GP had already provided his definitive diagnosis in the form of a bemused smile, coupled with an eloquent shrug and even the lady next door, who stems from yeoman stock and dabbles in the curative properties of nettle soup and goose grease and whose treatment for a boil is to give it a sharp whack with the family Bible, was mystified. Nevertheless, she stuck her customary pose for consultations, by inserting the tip of her little finger into the corner of her mouth, leaving the rest of the hand cradling her jaw while she rolled her eyes ceiling-wards and murmured, "Agrimony tea. Where can I find some agrimony?" I guessed that it wouldn't be on the shelves at Safeway and I looked out at the thin sleet that was falling, recognising that a hunt through the window box would be out of the question, let alone a field trip to some ice bound ditch. When Spring came around again, I remembered to look up this elusive weed in Culpeper's Pharmacopoeia, only to discover that it was considered to be most efficacious for "drawing out thorns and splinters and strengthening dislocated joints"! So, be advised to forgo the "eye of newt" and take an aspirin. Me? Well, I couldn't lift as much as a sip of water to my lips and sat, wrapped in my dressing gown and a cloud of bacteria, feeling increasingly effete and decidedly lackadaisical, watching television.

Once upon a time, I might have swapped my self-guiding, ball-bearing, Rollfast skates (with non-chafe instep straps) for the opportunity of watching moving pictures in my own living room but I now realise that skating can be fun. Daytime television was a novelty for me and I was totally unprepared for the twosome who presented the Breakfast Show. "She" had a fascinating hair-style, incredibly flouting the basic laws of physics. "He", on the other hand, should have been farsighted enough to include a comb and razor on his Christmas list. Both had attended courses on "How To Be Odiously Jolly At That Hour In The Morning When Life Is At Its Lowest Ebb". Both smirked their way through fire, flood and homicide, smiling cheesily at the camera, displaying sparkling sets of gleaming white china, guaranteed to provoke instant hostility from the dentally challenged, until one yearned for one of those Tom and Jerry scenarios when the indomitable rodent takes dead aim with a bowling ball and....!

Side-stepping the Movie Channels with their endless conveyor belts of films (having already seen "Challenge to Lassie", three times), I picked my way through a minefield of repeated Soaps ("Adrian and Daphne finally get engaged, meanwhile Melissa's problems are made even worse by her thorny relationship with Nigel"); a whole raft of Antiques shows ("Our expert, Ridley Wood discusses the booming market in vintage mangles") and the omnipresent, Cookery series ("Today, Mario Ecoli prepares Monkfish and Cherry Shashlik with Prunes").

By lunchtime, I hoped that the worst was behind me and discovered, too late, that every commercial during the afternoon was aimed, specifically, at my own age group. Not surprisingly, the advertisers had been thorough with their homework, pin-pointing the peak viewing time for older persons, who would still be encased in their dressing gowns, lolling in their armchairs, feeling slightly moribund, hanging on, waiting for the Last Trump to sound.

Time had not dealt kindly with the husband and wife duo of ex-ballroom dancers, who, squinting myopically at the cue cards, advised me to ensure that my loved ones would be cared for when the time came for me to take the floor for the last waltz - "Cover that comes with a host of benefits" (Including ham sandwiches and dry sherry for the wake?). I awoke, thirty minutes later, to find myself confronted by a failed actor, dressed entirely in white, fronting a similarly clad, mixed bag of wrinkly extras (No visible wings), loitering on a bowling green. The simple message was aimed at those "between 50 and 80" and "no health checks or medical are required" (just as well!). There were further outbreaks of Critical Illness Cover ("Every 40 seconds an adult is struck down") and Criminal Injury Benefits ("For Your Peace Of Mind") which had me checking my pulse and ensuring the chain was on the door.

The "Exercisers" were next. Have you noticed that these appliances are invariably demonstrated by prematurely grey 33 year-olds? What's more, they always mimic somewhat up-market sporting activities, rather than duplicating the action required to operate a pinball machine or play darts. You are able to re-create rowing, cross-country skiing and probably, Sumo wrestling, in the comfort of your own home and one contraption sponsored by Linda Evans, simulates "The Lunge". This could be a reference to fencing or sword play of some kind but "send for the free colour brochure" before you risk it.

After the "get yourself in shape" gimmicks, it was the turn of the "OK, so it was too late in your case" items. These are the things that you will have wished that you'd insured against needing. The "walk-in" bath tub ("Worried about taking a bath - Close the doors and step in - Details of price on request"). The electrically adjustable bed - the "Free £150 discount voucher" will provide an indication of the actual cost. The Stair Lift ("Lifetime Money Back Guarantee Option") which whizzes you up to the bathroom at Mach One. It's cheaper to buy a bungalow. At least, I was spared the video equivalent of an advert spied in one of those magazines aimed at the "young at

heart" - an aerosol spray for renovating tombstones!

I won't insult you with a clumsy "link" from today's television to old time radio but it was less complicated then, with Phillip's "Milk of Magnesia", "Master OK - The Saucy Boy" and "The good cook who went to Chivers' factory". Actually, what I am here for, is to write about one of Bing Crosby's most exceptional radio series. It is no secret that for the past two years, I have been researching Bing's radio career through newspapers of the period, consulting, among others, "The New York Times", "The Chicago Daily Tribune", "The San Francisco Chronicle", "The Los Angeles Times", "The New Orleans Times-Picatune" and "The Washington Post".

The series, referred to above was only his third excursion as a sponsored, solo artist. It was for the makers of Woodbury Facial Soap and there are several reasons for using the word "exceptional". From a personal point of view, the prime consideration is that, compared with his other regular series, there is less knowledge of the content of these shows than any others. In spite of spanning two whole seasons, covering a total of 72 programmes, it would appear that the substance of more than half of these programmes is unknown but I shall share with you some of the "crumbs" that I have gathered. (As a footnote to the above, I should say that some sources suggest that the series was divided into two, 26-week seasons but I have discovered no breaks in continuity to support this theory and this is particularly apparent in the second season which consisted of 39 programmes).

The initial broadcast opened on 16th October 1933 without a great deal of ballyhoo but with dissension over which theme song should prevail. Crosby argued that "Where the Blue of the Night" was the logical theme because the song had been identified with him ever since he had been on the air. Whereas, the sponsor's agency, Lennon and Mitchell's contention was that "Loveliness" had always been the Woodbury theme, no matter what name was connected with them. Bing's answer to this was that even though there were some listeners who associated "Loveliness" with the product, it seemed to him that the listener association of his signature tune and himself would be of greater benefit all round. Guess who won!

More controversy was sparked off by the arrival from New York of Dale Winbrow, sent by the agency to be Woodbury's producer. After introducing himself, Winbrow listened to the programme which had been prepared for the following week and chose not to mince words when voicing his own candid criticism. This provoked Bing and Lennie Hayton to declare themselves "out" of the show. Appeasement was finally secured by the Crosby management who persuaded the "deserters" to hold fire while the "situation" was worked out with the agency in the East.

Another reason that the programme differed from his two previous series as solo performer, was that Bing assumed the mantle of Master of Ceremonies, introducing guests and musical numbers. For the first time he was given a script, involving banter with both guests and the announcer, Ken Niles and why not? He had around twenty screen appearances under his belt - he was an ac-TOR and if couldn't read a line by this time, he should have been thinking about going back to Law School. So, the personality which producer and writer, Burt McMurtrie helped create and which was later to be refined by, Carroll Carroll, on Kraft Music Hall, came into being. But anything written here could not improve on the following quotation from the book, "Music In The Air" by Philip K. Eberly:

"....Subsequently, it was found those qualities that characterised Bing Crosby, the singer, could be translated into Bing Crosby, the total personality. Thus, once Bing Crosby was accorded the once-a-week-prime-time treatment on the Woodbury programme in the fall of 1933, America heard what was to be the first of the well-calculated Crosby image, the enduring persona of the relaxed, easy-going performer - one that the script-writers would find a joy to exploit....Throughout his long radio career, even after his shows were designated 'variety', Bing Crosby never strayed from his popular music base. For the Woodbury show, there were generally three songs by Crosby, one by the Boswells, one by Bing with The Boswells and an orchestral instrumental in each half hour. Writers found his carefree manner useful for framing song lead-ins."

The Woodbury shows also stand apart from others by the use of no less than five orchestras. Lennie Hayton officiated for the first thirteen programmes then gave way to Gus Arnheim. The reason given was that Hayton said he had difficulties in finding competent musicians, in Los Angeles, who were not already engaged with another orchestra. The Arnheim Orchestra, led by Lou Kosloff, filled the spot for the next seven shows when it was superseded by Carol Lofner's Beverly Wilshire Orchestra. Lofner probably enjoyed a maximum of three broadcasts before being replaced by Jimmy Grier's Orchestra who saw out the first season and the Georgie Stoll Orchestra found steady work, providing accompaniment for the last 39 programmes, from September 1934 to June 1935.

Vocal groups were the order of the day. Both the Boswell Sisters and the Mills Brothers had already appeared in 'The Big Broadcast' and recorded with Bing and to these can be added, Kay Thompson and the Three Rhythm Kings and later, the Williams Sisters - Alice, Evelyn and Laura who hailed from Tacoma.

The guest list, with a few exceptions, was notably, "scratchy" - Mary Lou Raymond, "18 year-old Californian songstress"; Ed Lowry, "vaudeville comedian"; Irene Taylor, "well-known blues singer"; Charles Bourne, "eccentric jazz pianist"; Mildred Stone, "this newest movie star" (no, neither have I!); Charles Irwin, "well-known" (so "well-known" that every newspaper prints his name as "Erwin" but he did appear in "The King of Jazz" and "Double or Nothing") and Joan Marsh, "movie star" (featured in several minor films and as Bing's 'assistant' in the carnival sequence which opened "Road to Zanzibar"). However, Carole Lombard guested on 2nd April 1934, in "a dramatised preview" of "We're Not Dressing"..."Miss Lombard and Crosby will sing their outstanding solos and duets from the score" (?!!). Much the same thing may have happened with Kitty Carlisle and Marian Mansfield on 27th November 1934 when the subject was "Here Is My Heart" and on 12th February 1935 with Joan Bennett, as guest, helping to promote "Mississippi". It is interesting to note that in this programme, a song which had been dropped from the film before release was used. "Pablo, You Are My Heart" was written to be performed by a female vocalist. It is unlikely that Joan Bennett would have obliged and more likely that it was performed as an orchestral piece. The song was re-worked later to become "Johnny One Note" in the film "Babes In Arms". Others who appeared were Andy Devine, Martha Tilton and Pinky Tomlin. Tomlin was a man of many parts, sometime vocalist (a light but pleasant voice) with the Grier Orchestra, he appeared in several films and wrote, "The Love Bug Will Bite You" and the enduring standard, "The Object Of My Affection".

Aside from a natural propensity to feature songs from his recent movies, the programmes display a mouth-watering menu of numbers for lovers of the young Crosby. Early versions of "P.S. I Love You", "Isle Of Capri", "Stars Fell On Alabama" and "I Kiss Your Hand Madame". Unheard renditions of "I Saw Stars", "(There's A) Little Picture Playhouse In My Heart", "Solitude" and "I Won't Dance". In addition, there will be those of you who may be cherishing sheet music with the legend, "introduced by Bing Crosby" whose origins you have been unable to trace. Perhaps, some of the following titles may be of assistance. "Night Owl" by Herman Hupfield from the film "Take A Chance" and "Yes, My Dear", both featured on the programme of 13th November 1933; "On The Wrong Side Of The Fence" (12.2.34); "It's All Forgotten Now" written by Ray Noble for Al Bowlly (6.11.34); "I Woke Up Too Soon" by Dave Franklin (15.1.35); "Tiny Little Fingerprints", "Throwin' Stones At The Sun" and "Sweet Music" (26.2.35); "Ev'ry Day" (26.3.35); "If The Moon Turns Green" and "The Words Are In My Heart" from Dubin and Warren for "Gold Diggers Of 1935" - Remember, "56 Girls and 56 Pianos"? (2.4.35); "Reckless" by Oscar Hammerstein and Jerome Kern for the film of the same name (6.4.35); "Night Wind" and "Lost My Rhythm, Lost My Music, Lost My Girl" (23.4.35); "I See You Whenever I Close My Eyes" and "She's A Latin From Manhattan" (7.5.35) and "You Saved My Life", "Seeing is Believing" and "In A Little Gypsy Tea Room" all from the last broadcast under the Woodbury banner on 11th June 1935.

There will be no need to mention that, on occasions, items drawn from newspapers, can be hopelessly inaccurate. Some misprints are easily correctable -"*Eddie* Stoll and his Orchestra" *"Jimmie Greer"* and songs *"Blue Mood"* (Moon), *"Wishing* On The Moon" (I Wished). There are also those which confuse, "Bing will sing the lead supported by *four trios"* but another quote comes to the rescue, in this case, with the assurance that this is "a choir of twelve mixed voices"! However, the columns of "The Los Angeles Times" and "The New Orleans Times-Picayune" do serve to rectify a long held misapprehension. Three complete Woodbury programmes survive and have been issued on various LPs, over the years. They are the shows of the 28th May 1934, 18th September 1934 and 19th March 1935. The last dated has always been presumed to be the broadcast of 23rd April 1935 and so, your records can be amended, accordingly. These transcriptions betray their age but serve to verify that, at least, some of the printed details that have been pored over, are true. It is probable that the information was offered to the newspapers in the form of press releases from the stations showing guests and a proposed schedule of songs. Whether it was printed or not, is another matter. There is no doubt that the Press regarded radio as a rival and a few years later

many papers were to ban all radio "chatter", settling instead, for a simple "radio log", showing only the times and titles of the programmes. Of course, this does not explain the paucity of details for substantial chunks of the Woodbury series but the following quote from "The Los Angeles Times" may afford some partial explanation:

"Bing's grown a bit careless about his radio programmes, of late - sauntering into the station a few minutes before the broadcasts and announcing that he hasn't any idea what numbers he is going to sing. Some of his shows have suffered from lack of adequate preparation. Well, wouldn't you be inclined towards indifference if you were well on the way to becoming a millionaire. Yet Bing's tremendous popularity and wealth has done nothing to change his charm and forthright personality. He's generous to a fault and can take a rap with a grin."

My frequent hope is that, somehow, the complete scripts for the Woodbury series will miraculously, come to light, from a dusty cupboard, in a forgotten studio, enabling us to round out this very grey period in Bing's radio career.

Lionel Pairpoint

(Editor: What a superb article! Hilarious at the outset and then giving us much new information about the Woodbury shows. Well done, Lionel.

We published a listing of the Woodbury shows in BING 97 and Lionel has expanded this but he still lacks a lot of detail. Does anyone have further information? I suspect that we shall have to write to the Museum of Radio and Television in New York to see if they can help. Perhaps the National Archives in Washington have further information. Ideas and suggestions would be welcome because, in due course, the ICC is hoping to publish a most detailed and fascinating directory of Bing's radio shows which Lionel is putting together. Naturally we want this to be as complete as possible.)

Dear John - From Bing

In the last edition of Bing, we published an article about John Scott Trotter which had been sent into us by Mervyn Thomas. We mentioned that Mervyn was in touch with John Scott's family and, subsequently, JST's nephew, Scott Kinghorn, has forwarded some copies of correspondence from Bing to his illustrious Uncle. These letters make riveting reading and let me set the background.

In 1954, Bing had a weekly radio show for General Eectric and on June 6, Gary Crosby took this over for a 13 week period. It was envisaged that Bing would return to the show in the Autumn. Bing himself was a widower at that time and also he was having kidney stone problems again. The first letter to John Scott Trotter is dated August 4, 1954 and comes from Hayden Lake, Idaho.

Dear John,

I have been listening to the last few programs that Gary has done, and I wanted to get a note off to you saying how much I enjoyed them. The arrangements seemed very clever and interesting, and I am sure that they are kicking up a lot of interest throughout the country.

He still has a very definite problem with the delivery of a ballad. I don't know whether experience is going to overcome it or not. I have got him vocalising - or at least he avers that he is acceding to my demands in this regard and has been working out at the piano daily. This will stretch his chords a little and give him some ease and freedom which he now lacks when he sings a ballad.

It occurred to me that it might possibly be a remedy if you could pick out some songs that are ballads but run along in tempo, like "Rosalie" and "You Were Meant For Me" and others of this type. The tempo can be fairly bright, but still the delivery is in a ballad style and might be something that he could handle better. There is a song Alice Faye sang in a Universal picture, I believe Tommy Dorsey was in the picture. The name of this song eludes me just now, but it is a perfect example of the kind of song I mean. It's a ballad, but it's easy to sing and it can be done in a fairly brisk tempo. There are any number of such type songs - most of them in years past because they don't seem to write them like that any more, but they were all good hits and I think they are things that he can sing and he won't appear to disadvantage in singing them. Maybe you can look up some of these and give one or two of then a whirl and see what ensues.

Actually, I am fully appreciative of the many problems which present themselves in connection with Gary. When you stop to think about it, you must admit that he hasn't had what we would call a great deal of experience. He has sung occasionally with me on the

show, and on several records, and outside of that he's never done any singing whatever professionally. He doesn't do any at school or anywhere else like I did when I was his age. And even when I was younger I had sung many times, and sometimes for weeks on end, with a little orchestra. He's never done this, and he's just got to sing and sing until he gets freedom and ease and then he'll be able to handle ballads.

I think if he can't handle ballads he is going to be in bad shape, because there isn't much of a future in just singing "Gambler's Guitar" and stuff like that. I suppose he would have better success with the ballads he is doing now if he did them real intimate - in fact almost talked them. That's generally the history of singers. I know when I first started out I was a real whisperer, and later I gained confidence and the voice gets more flexible and then you can stand back and belt it a little. I notice he did something like this on "I Understand", and it sounded quite good.

Well. those are just a few random thoughts, John, dictated from Hayden Lake. Very lovely up here. Cool, and lots of golf and swimming and water skiing going on. I endeavour mightily to keep some sort of order, but it's hopeless task. Bed check every night, of course, and trying to get somebody to mow the lawn and pick up the clothes and a million and one other things. I can't wait until they are all 21 and I'll be relieved of this onerous responsibility. But then I suppose I will be lonesome without them. It's a genuine quandary.

Rosemary has my phone number in case you want to call me about anything, and I'll be here for most of the month of August, I imagine.

As ever,

Bing

Well, a most interesting view of Bing's parental concerns. Obviously, he was unimpressed with Gary's performance singing ballads and was using John Scott to help put the messages across. How typical his comments were when talking about his children reaching the age of 21. I would guess that all parents of teenagers have said something similar at times.

It would seem that, over the next few weeks, Bing announced that he was not returning to his radio show and this would have effectively put John Scott and the others associated with the show temporarily out of work. JST wrote to Bing on August 24 but unfortunately we don't know what he said. We do have a copy of Bing's reply of September 9, again from Hayden Lake.

Dear John,

Please excuse the long delay between receipt of your letter of August 24 and my reply thereto. Too many golf tournaments and too much fishing up here, I guess, for one to pay the proper attention to one's correspondence.

First, in connection with Gary, I think that he did make remarkable progress in the 13-week period just concluded. A lot of people don't realise just how little experience he had in the past. Outside of the appearances with me and the three or four records he made, he had absolutely no experience in front of the public or recording or on the radio.

In school, contrary to what most kids with a little talent are accustomed to do - he didn't participate at all in amateur theatricals or the university productions. This I deplore of course, but there seems to be little I can do about it. He tells me that the boys around the fraternity house consider anybody a square who in any way indulges in campus activities or assumes student offices. A whole new philosophy seems to have developed since I went to school. In order to be attractive now, apparently, a kid must be a complete clod. Of course if a boy gets very good marks and likes to study and shows an interest in the course that he is taking, he is utterly loathsome.

I think your suggestion about him working a little on tone production and singing to a tape machine is a very good one. Ampex owes me just such a machine, and I may grab it and have it sent up to him this fall. I don't know whether he'd ever plug it in or not, but it's an experiment that's worth a try. Doubtless the fraternity would pick up his pin if he ever demonstrated such unique interest in the career he intended to pursue when he got out of college.

Of course I am determined that he should complete his college course, if it takes two years. Getting him into Stanford was quite a chore, and keeping him there has been an even more onerous assignment, and I certainly am not about to let him blow it with only a year or so to go. It's my belief that he can still keep in the public eye and keep in action through the medium of phonograph records, if they go at all.

I of course, John, feel pretty sad about not going back on the radio this season. I have given many reasons for this decision to many different people, but I feel I can tell you the truth and that you will believe and understand me. John I don't sing anywhere as good as I used to, and I feel sincerely that it's getting worse. I don't see any purpose in trying to stretch something out that was once acceptable and that now is merely adequate, if that. I don't know what the reason for this condition is, unless it's apathy. I just don't have the interest in singing. I am not keen about it any more. Songs all sound alike to me, and some of them so shoddy and trivial. I don't mean I didn't sing some cheap songs and bad songs in the old days, but I had such a tremendous interest in singing and was so wrapped up in the work that it didn't matter. I don't know how to diagnose the condition, but it seems to me that possibly this apathy, this lack of desire, when I have to go to a recording session, transmits itself into nervous exhaustion and fatigue.

This must all sound very vague to you, but it's the best I can do, and at least I assure you that I am very sincere in what I am trying to describe. The sycophants that hang about, the press, the photographers, the song publishers and pluggers and the pests of all descriptions that grab me everytime I step outside my front door weary me indescribably. Succinctly, John, I seem to have had it. Maybe a year or so away will make me feel differently, and my interest will revive.

I certainly hate to see the wonderful organisation we have break up, and it gives me a wrench to be an instrument in its dissolution. I shall never forget all the good years you and I had together, and all the wonderful unselfish things you did for me and my interests. You had a great deal to put up with at times, and your patience and forbearance was always incredible. You must know how grateful I am to you for everything that you have done. And I don't mean just professionally either. Much of the same goes to Murdo. There's a great boy, and I think the radio industry should prepare some sort of a plaque or citation for him for just putting up with Morrow through the years, if putting up with me wasn't enough.

I'll be back in Pebble Beach after the 21st of the month, John, and probably will stay around there for a couple of weeks, and then will be on into Hollywood. If you are in the Carmel area be sure and give me a ring and we can get together. My very best to you.

As ever,

Bing

Bing was undoubtedly having a mid-life crisis around this time although I don't suppose the symptoms were recognised in those days. His kidney problems must have been debilitating as well. As we know, Bing did come back to radio on November 22, 1954 but this time it was a simple daily format of some chat and some songs with Buddy Cole. I believe that Gary Crosby dropped out of Stanford in January 1955. John Scott Trotter found other avenues for his talents as described in the last BING.

Over the following years, Bing and JST remained friends and I was interested to read a hand-written note from Bing to John Scott dated September 9, 1966. This is written on Petworth House notepaper.

Dear John,

This is a fabulous place, we came here as Lord Egremont's guests. His waters we fished in Cumberland and it was marvelous. It's in Sussex and is just loaded with fine furniture and Holbeins, Van Dycks, Turners and Titians. Kathryn's agape! Hearst was just kidding himself, believe me. The drive down from Cumberland, stopping of course, for the racing at Doncaster, convinced me that the English countryside is the most beautiful of all. And now Petworth! You should see our rooms. Incredible tapestries and furniture. We'll never recover.

Yours,

Bing

Fascinating stuff and the letter surely reflects the close personal relationship between Bing and John Scott Trotter. I particularly like Bing's crack alluding to William Randolph Hearst and his castle at San Simeon.

Our thanks to Scott Kinghorn and to Mervyn Thomas for letting us see this very rare correspondence which usefully expands our knowledge of Bing the man.

Malcolm Macfarlane

Bert Bishop's BING ON THE BOX

I know, I know; you're getting that deja vu feeling. To be honest so am I. Not that what's been on offer is anything but good - for the most part - it's just that it would be very satisfying to chronicle and report in depth a couple of early Paramount movies from the classic Crosby period just for a change. MISSISSIPPI, say, or TWO FOR TONIGHT. I can't help thinking, though, that the Hale-Bopp Comet will be lighting up the southern sky again before the programme planners and powers that be sprinkle our screens with stardust of a different kind. However, we have to accept that the films presented are not intended to feed the fans but are aimed at the viewing public in general, and in that respect Bing is kept well to the forefront by his regular appearances. Though, perhaps, HIGH SOCIETY every ten days may be overdoing things a little!

MARCH

SAY ONE FOR ME	Movie Channel	10th. 19th. 27th.
STAGECOACH	Sky Movies	7th.
THE COUNTRY GIRL	Sky Movies Gold	13th.
ROAD TO RIO	Sky Movies Gold	24th.
THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT	TNT	22nd.

APRIL

THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT	TNT	1st.
HIGH TIME	Sky Movies	8th. 21st.
MR. MUSIC	Sky Movies	7th.
16th.HIGH SOCIETY	TNT	31st

MAY

HIGH SOCIETY	TNT	20th. 21st.
(2 screenings 21st)		

JUNE

HIGH SOCIETY	TNT	29th.
(2 screenings)		
THE COUNTRY GIRL	Sky Movies Gold	8th.
BLUE SKIES	Sky Movies Gold	3rd.
THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT	TNT	4th.
ROAD TO BALI	Sky Movies Gold	25th
ROAD TO HONG KONG	Sky Movies Gold	28th.

JULY

HIGH SOCIETY	TNT	8th.
(2 screenings)		
STAGECOACH	Sky Movies Gold	12th.

Of the three 'Road' films ROAD TO RIO might be described as the last of the originals and, apart from retaining the well defined and expected comedy routines and encounters, also has the added bonus of the Andrews Sisters teaming up with Bing for the snappily performed, aptly conceived and plot related Burke - Van Heusen song which opines that when it comes to romance the language of love is universal. The film is also unique in that it is the only one of the series where Bob 'gets the girl'. Albeit very sneakily!

Bing and Bob behind bars on the Road to Rio.

Malcolm 'phoned me in late April to advise me to look out for the film SMASH UP-A WOMAN DESTROYED which was being screened in the early hours of 28th. April on the London ITV channel. Reputedly based on the marital life of Dixie Lee Crosby, it starred Susan Hayward in the Oscar nominated role of a singer on the skids hitting the bottle as her shiftless songwriter/singer husband's career begins to flourish. As I'm an Anglia region viewer, and not prepared to risk life and limb re-aligning my TV aerial for such a laterally orientated piece of Crosbyana, I'm indebted to Trevor Wagstaff for supplying me a copy. Principally from the pen of Dorothy Parker this rather down-beat melodrama was in the best tradition of THE SNAKE PIT, LOST WEEKEND, I'LL CRY TOMORROW and, indeed, THE COUNTRY GIRL. Sufficiently far removed as to avoid a libel lawsuit there were, nevertheless, certain similarities to certain persons which could be drawn. Hardly an uplifting experience, and the origins of its reputation not to be taken seriously, this film is recommended only for the acting talent of Miss Hayward.

'Auntie's Sporting Bloomers' is one of those typically British, broad-humoured TV programme titles which must bemuse overseas readers. For their edification the BBC has long been affectionately called 'Auntie'; an epithet derived from the days when a strict moral code regulated what could or could not be broadcast. Though the pendulum has long since swung in the opposite direction the appellation remains. 'Bloomers' rounds off the innuendo, here referring not to Amelia Bloomer's famous garment but simply one of numerous synonyms for 'a mistake'. Host Terry Wogan introduced a sequence on golfing gaffes with Bing's "Straight Down The Middle", which heralded the arrival of comedian Jimmy Tarbuck. A guest with Bing and Bob Hope on a 1960's Eamonn Andrews show, Jimmy related how Bing telephoned him at 7 a.m. one morning suggesting a game. "Who is that?", enquired Tarby. "Bing.", came the reply. "Bing who?", came the further enquiry. "Bing Crosby!", said the voice. "If you're Bing Crosby sing me 'White Christmas'", responded J.T. A few bars of the famous song drifted into the earpiece of Tarby's telephone - and the assignation was established. Later on the links Bing had a laugh about the banter which, knowing Tarbuck's comedic style, may well have been close to the truth.

STAN WHITE

The wireless continues to provide most of the material for this column, but only due to the tireless efforts of ICC members who promote the cause and supply the CDs. One such is the member whose name heads this part of the proceedings. In recognition of the 94th. anniversary of Bing's birth Stan managed to get himself invited on a telephone link up on John Richards' very vintage BBC Radio Lincolnshire programme thereby ensuring listeners of a half hour of informative entertainment. Stan is no stranger to broadcasting, and when it concerns his two great musical loves - Bing and theatre organs - there aren't too many around who can match his knowledge. Having established Bing's true birthdate the first of four Crosby recordings reflected this joint interest. "Little Lady Make-Believe" being the track, which dates from 1938 and features Eddie Dunstedter on the Warner Studio Wurlitzer pipe organ. As pointed out, this melodic if rather wistfully sentimental ballad seems to have been overlooked on CD releases. I don't have it in this format and reference to Jim Reilly's encyclopaedic compilation confirms its absence from compact disc. I'm sure that will be remedied ere long though. Stan continued by playing a private tape on which Bing answers some of Stan's enquiries regarding these organ accompaniment recordings, but as was often the case, though interesting to hear some of his comments, Bing's powers of recall failed to match the information which most enthusiasts are aware of anyway. Stan spoke of his first meeting with Bing in a London hotel and how he encountered that first 'frosty' aloofness, quickly melting into friendly repartee as Bing recognised a true supporter.

The Whiteman era can always be relied upon to create a deep sense of musical history, principally because most of the musicians who went on to establish themselves and make an impact on the ensuing twenty-five years of popular music were on the scene during the 'Twenties and early 'Thirties. Indeed, many of them actually a part of the most prestigious orchestra of that time. John Richards is a well informed radio presenter himself, so with Stan's presence an intelligent discussion on many of the great names was bound to enhance the proceedings, pointed up with the 1929 recording of "After You've Gone".

Another serious omission from the CD catalogue is the 1942 waxing of "Blue Shadows And White Gardenias" that Bing cut with the Victor Young Orchestra. A lovely track here used as a lead in to Stan's arrival on the Crosby collecting trail around that time. Though it was hearing "Home On The Range" coupled with "Brother, Can You Spare A Dime" that first encouraged him to cross the threshold of the nearest record store. The fact that he emerged with "McNamara's Band" will cause bemused head shaking among many senior collectors; but we were all young and foolish once! Stan's love of the pipe organ has given him inside info on Bing's association and admiration for the great names in organ music, and on this side of the pond none has reached the popularity of Reginald Dixon. Bing had correspondence with that doyen of the multi-keyboard to the extent that he sent Mr. Dixon a congratulatory telegram on the occasion of his retirement concert at the Tower Ballroom, Blackpool. But it was the arrival and impact of John Scott Trotter on the Crosby career that was the centrepiece for the remainder of the half-hour that closed the 'phone-in contribution. The illustrative recording being Bing's rendition of the Cole Porter classic, "Just One Of Those Things". Nice to hear an enthusiastic collector who knows what he's talking about and is keen enough make the most of an air-time opportunity.

In an earlier programme J.R. featured four consecutive Crosby tracks. A situation now referred to as 'back-to-back' I believe. These were "I've Got The Girl", "Muddy Water", "Neighbours In the Sky" and "My Blue Heaven". It may be readily deduced that Mr. Richards has the most vintage record programme on British airwaves - unless you know different. Whilst the titles mentioned may not be everyone's cup of tea I'd rather listen to any one of them, and most from the same era, than the admittedly exuberant but musically corny John Stamford - Shamus O'Connor collaboration that Stan spent his half-a-crown on; million seller or not. So step forward John. As the current recipient of this column's 'Not The Best Of Bing' award you deserve a much wider audience. This leads me to the pertinent comments in Michael Collins' letter in the last issue of the magazine. The constant replay of just a few artiste associated recordings must surely be detrimental to the memory of those artistes and broadcasting in general. It's a form of musical brainwashing which, as Michael says, should be actively discouraged. Fortunately, in Britain, there is an active army of supporters who badger the broadcasters into looking beyond the boringly obvious, and not only in the Crosby camp. But there's still much to be done here and, seemingly, even more so in the States. An earlier letter received from David Lobosco stated that all he ever heard of Bing on U.S. radio was "True Love" and "White Christmas". There is no wish to deride those recordings but the voice and memory of Harry Lillis Crosby deserves better than this.

"Aah! Wouldn't it be nice if you sat in the bath, sang a song, and that sort of sound came out." Rix At Six: as he closed his programme with Bing singing "Swinging On A Star" on BBC Radio Essex. This programme immediately precedes the always reliable 78 VINTAGE presided over with waggish humour by the ever cheerful John Gunn. So four tracks later it was Bing again with "I Love You Samantha". Louis Armstrong had also been featured with Bing on "Dardenella" - one of the earliest dance band hits and, in 1920, maybe the first million seller, as recorded by the Ben Selvin Orchestra on Victor 18633. A listener request for more of Bing from the 'Thirties has been reasonably well catered for with "After You've Gone", "My Honey's Lovin' Arms", "She Reminds Me Of You" and "When Day Is Done" all being there or thereabouts. The latter track is seldom heard on radio, as is "June Comes Around Every Year". In fact I can't recall having heard that slice of subterfuge from OUT OF THIS WORLD on the wireless in a very long time. The title track and "Swinging On A Star" from GOING MY WAY along with Irving Berlin's "Some Sunny Day" illustrate the considerable variety in this mid-evening, Saturday night festival of yesteryear.

The only reliable spot for a Crosby recording on National radio is Desmond Carrington each Sunday at 1 p.m

where he hosts Radio 2 All-Time Greats. He likes his 'Bing's Treasury - The Songs I Love' collection and has been playing quite a few of these Geoff Love (Mishel Piastro) accompanied tracks in recent weeks. Other titles also get a look in though, and "If You Love Me" and the 1975 version of "Alabamy Bound" with Paul Smith arranging and conducting are, again, two rare ones on radio.

BENNY GREEN follows hard on the heels of Carrington's two hours. In Benny's case sixty minutes of music described, broadly, as celebrating the work of the composers in the popular field. Having been the recipient of John McNicholas's two, recent Jonzo CDs he was at a loss to understand why these "beautifully crafted albums" haven't been better supported especially as; "The planet is crawling with Crosby fanatics who send me complaining letters if I go more than a couple of weeks without playing something by their idol.", he notes. Like all those who do support John's terrific project Benny believes the continued production of these superb albums is a worthy cause because of the priceless detail, apart from being of great historical importance. From JZCD11 Benny played "Please" and "A Ghost Of A Chance" or, as he called it, "I Don't Stand A Chance With A Ghost Like You". B.G. also wondered just how much Crosby contributed to the writing of the song in view of highly skilled lyricist Ned Washington and composer Victor Young's involvement. From Volume 12 the selection was "You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me", with Mr. Green finding the music of Guy Lombardo more likely to have caused the depression rather than, as the sleeve notes convey, 'a godsend to listeners in those depression-hit times.' In the event, it should be noted, Guy Lombardo was almost certainly the most commercially successful and enduring dance band in the history of popular music. Stateside friends having expressed the opinion that New Year's Eve television has never been quite the same since his demise. However, for all his abrasive approach Benny Green does play some classic Crosby from time to time and always comments favourably on the singular importance of Bing's achievements and unique contribution to the history of his own chosen career in popular music and the jazz scene in particular.

PAUL BARNES

Despite some listener criticism of too much of 'The Boss' the 'Gold For Grown-Ups' programme continues to feature the most prolific and variable amount of the 'Old Groaner' to a degree that no one living within a hundred miles of the fair city of Norwich, and owning a wireless set, has any reason to be unaware of the unbeatable range, style and quality of entertainment which is the legacy of the Crosby career. Paul continues to greet each month with the Calendar Song and the first take of "A Ghost Of A Chance" had its predicted outing for April. This was soon to be followed by the hit number from HERE IS MY HEART, "June In January". For years this recording used to introduce Bing's Pro-Am Golf Tournament. One of the greatest American sporting events played, as it was, in the first month of each year at Pebble Beach. Paul found the lyric, and Georgie Stoll arrangement, to have considerable melodrama of European light operatic influence rather than the accustomed upbeat of its native shores. Another successful song of equal melodrama is "Brother, Can You Spare A Dime", and this, too, was featured along with the information that both Bing's and Rudy Vallee's recording of it spent eight weeks at the top of the hit parade - though stage managed, for the best financial return, to be at different times of course.

Rarely heard on radio is Bing and Nat Cole in tandem. "Sam's Song" - in a distinctly vaudeville style - is an example of the pair of them duetting together. "Lazy River"/"Paper Doll" with the Mills Brothers slots into a similar, neo-barber-shop category continuing on radio, to be one of Bing's greatest collaborations, ranked up there with Connee Boswell, Johnny Mercer, The Andrews Sisters, Louis Armstrong and Rosemary Clooney. April the 20th. was a memorable night for Crosby buffs: a Bing festival of no mean variety. Three Irving Berlin songs; "Cheek To Cheek", "A Fella With An Umbrella" and "Some Sunny Day", of which one is from the gold CD on which Paul observes the solecism in the sleeve notes that state that Bing is here performing with a modern swinging orchestra for the first time! As he rightly points out Bing performed with such orchestras throughout his career. Whether Whiteman, Ellington, Bob Crosby and elements of the Trotter team, et al, these were all modern in their day. Bing's jazz pedigree is impeccable, notes Paul, adding: "Take for example "Moonburn". The timbre in his voice is quite sensational and unlike anything else heard on this earth." The Bing-fest continued with the Les Paul accompanied "What Am I Gonna Do About You?" and closed with the 'wonderfully restrained all-round performance' of "Three Little Words".

In a run up to the first of May and the birthday tribute, Paul again played the Les Paul track and the Mills Brothers brace of titles, adding "Mister Meadowlark" and "Personality" (which included the Joe 'Boxing Gloves' Bushkin blow-up); "Put It There Pal" (the very extended radio parody with Bob Hope); one of the very best ballads from the 'Road' films, "Welcome To My Dreams"; "You Took Advantage Of Me" and the radio version of "Slow Boat To China" which featured Peggy Lee as his travelling companion. Paul likes this kind of be-bop accompaniment and notes, with enthusiasm, John Scott Trotter's willingness to 'move with the times' with these Kentonesque type arrangements. Not my cup of tea at all as I find them brash and aggravatingly vulgar. "Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams" is the Calendar Song for May, and this time Barnsey used the 1939 blow-up version, which has gained the respectability of commercial release on the MCA 4-CD boxed set. This Bing's birthday tribute evening continued with my own 'moon song' favourite "The Moon Got In My Eyes"; a beautiful number by the Burke-Johnston team from the film DOUBLE OR NOTHING on which Bing still had that little 'sob' in the voice more commonly known as the 'Crosby cry'. This is lovely track from the first ever recording session with John Scott Trotter. It is also one of the first, noticeable, examples of Bing's pronunciation of the word 'morning': then, and ever after, he dropped the 'g' in a pseudo-Irish vocal mannerism. At one point I wondered whether Paul had

raided my 78 rpm case holding records owned in my early teenage years, for three more special favourites were featured; namely: "Small Fry", "It Makes No Difference Now" and "An Apple For The Teacher". Other tracks played were "My Honey's Loving' Arms", "Tomorrow's My Lucky Day" and "Pinetop's Boogie Woogie". I've always had reservations about this latter recording. A great big question mark hangs over it. Certainly it's a great show case for the Lionel Hampton orchestra, and I would be the first to agree that comparisons are interesting rather than odious. But did Pinetop Smith's original recording really need to be reworked? After all, it is a piano boogie composition and not intended as a vehicle for the big band sound. I'm reminded of Liza Minnelli's response when asked to perform "Over The Rainbow": "It's been sung." is always her reply. The birthday special closed with "Tomorrow's My Lucky Day", a golfing number nearer to the truth than the more famous "Straight Down The Middle" as far as the amateur fraternity are concerned. Altogether a very varied and particularly enjoyable programme with tunes linked, as always, by Paul's knowledgeable and entertaining introductions and witticisms. I'm delighted to add a Bar to Barnsey's December 1996 N.T.B.O.B. award for his continued promotion and predilection of and for 'The Boss'.

THE BURNS AND ALLEN SHOW

A BBC Radio2 weekly comedy series hit the ICC headlines when it was advertised on air and in the 'Radio Times' that Bing was guesting on this 1947 half-hour of verbal mayhem to be broadcast on the 14th. May. The theme of the situation being that Gracie was working on a scheme to get Bing to retire so that her husband, soon to be known as 'Sugar-Throat Burns', could take over the number one spot in the crooner category. Well, George continued an active career for another forty-nine years and for the last twenty of them the rough edges to his singing would have been no disadvantage on the popular music scene. However, at that time Bing reigned supreme - Sinatra was at a low ebb - and, happily for us all, Gracie's plan remained an unfulfilled fantasy. Apart from the comedy dialogue Bing's contribution was the song "How Soon?" For many members, myself included, this resurrected programme came into the 'previously unheard' classification.

WESTWARD HO!

Bridgewater, Somerset, is fairly central for the reception of radio broadcasts in the South West region of the United Kingdom, which enables Maggie Ryan to pursue her dedication to the memory of Bing by not only supplying various presenters with current compact discs but also keeping this column informed of the end result. Regrettably, one of Bing's greatest admirers with his own programme, Ray Mansell, has been 'replaced' on BBC Radio South & West. But before going he was able to celebrate St. Patrick's Day with "How Can You Buy Killarney" and later let Bing and Jack Teagarden regale the listeners with a lesson on the "Birth Of The Blues". "Honeysuckle Rose" and the ubiquitous "Swinging On A Star" were given a spin before Ray bowed out with the aptly titled, Whiteman version, of "After You've Gone". Picking up the baton from his predecessor Chris Robinson seemed, initially, to be bumbingly inadequate, but he's improving all the time and plays quite a bit of Bing within a regular idea of a mystery year, or composer, for any given evening. Any record programme presenter who features such diverse musical Crosbyana as "There Ain't No Sweet Man", "Down By The River", "Ballerina", "Pick Yourself Up" and the lovely "Just For You" - among several other commercial recordings - is deserving of our attention. From radio there was "Take It Easy", with Marilyn Maxwell and the "slightly off the wall" version of "Exactly Like You" featuring the 'reconciliation' of the Dorsey brothers on Bing's July 1944 Kraft Music Hall. Chris came up with an interesting thought after playing "Once And For Always", which was as there is to be an eclipse of the sun this summer might it not have been an opportune time to re-make A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT down there around Tintagel. Good for tourism, he opined. That knowledgeable comment convinced me of his value to the Crosby cause.

Late Night Manx radio, with Judith Ley, also steers clear of the obvious. In fact the nearest she got to that genre was "Going My Way". So plenty of variety which included "Cheek To Cheek" and the multi-star version of "Pennies From Heaven". "Dearly Beloved" is considerably removed from 'the obvious' as too is "Gypsy Love Song", again featuring Frances Langford, here played as a special christening dedication for a family, and also to commemorate Bing's birthday. Bernie Quayle on the Isle Of Man, again Manx Radio, and Dewi Griffiths for BBC Radio Wales have featured one or two Crosby recordings, but not nearly enough to be greatly commended this time around I'm afraid. However, journeying much further north to Barrow in Cumbria we encounter Anne Hopper's Music Box. Plenty of good Crosbyana in this programme, and whilst it isn't vintage Bing at least it is varied enough to be worthy of itemised comment. For St. Patrick's Day "Top O' The Morning" opened the programme to be followed later by "Who Threw The Overalls In Mrs. Murphy's Chowder?" - and have you noticed that The Jesters sing 'overhauls'? In some general chit-chat about Bing and Bob Hope, Anne noted that there was some suggestion of an effort to put Bob's name forward for a knighthood. There being a precedent with the also English born Sir Douglas Fairbanks Jnr. But back to Bing - and the Andrews Sisters. Any number from the so-called 'complete recordings' CD of which "You Don't Have To Know The Language", "High On The List", "Ac-cent-tchu-ate The Positive" and "The Three Caballeros" were featured prominently. Whilst from radio, and still with the Sisters, "I Can Dream Can't I" has Bing being gently chided by Patty Andrews for overdoing the 'swoon' effect. Not on the Bing and the Andrews Sisters 53 track CD, by the way, are "Happy Wedding Day" -B, "Jingle Bells" -B and "Is You Is Or Is You Ain't Ma Baby?" -B. This latter, legitimate take, has been released on the 2-CD set 'Bing Crosby. The Definitive Collection' issued by

Music & Memories on MMD 1053-1/2. The other two mentioned are to be found on Crosby club releases.

Anne came up with an interesting diversion when she combined Bing and Frank Sinatra with a cross cutting presentation of "I Haven't Time To Be A Millionaire", but I think it was just a case of pique at her not having won the Lottery that night. She also played the rarely heard "Thanks For The Memory" and, probably never before heard on UK radio, Bing with Roy Rogers in an extensive segment from KMH June 1944; finally, "Chicago Style" and "Now You Has Jazz" were given a whirl.

STARS ON 78

Such is the title of Frank Wappat's programme in the Tyneside region of BBC broadcasting. Frank aims to feature digitally restored nostalgia straight from the wood, as one might say. Known as a founder of the Al Bowlly society of collectors, Bing also figures very highly in Frank's esteem and many of his recordings are given air time on Frank's popular programme. In a particular tribute to 'The Jazzin' Bing Crosby' three first class examples were played of Mr. C at his best in this genre, with top flight accompaniment from John Scott Trotter's Dixieland Eight for "Be Honest With Me", and practically the same outfit for "Nobody's Sweetheart Now" followed by "Ida, Sweet As Apple Cider" on the Red Nichols featured version. Later there was the Eddie Cantor hit "Makin' Whoopee!", again in jazz mode as recorded by the Paul Whiteman Orchestra which had Bing celebrating in the company of Jack Fulton, Austin Young and old college pal Al Rinker. In a more relaxed, crooning style a couple of romantic ballads from a very much later era, "Getting To Know You" and "Who Gave You The Roses?" enabled listeners to appreciate Bing's great range of style

and compare the sound of his still very good 1950's voice with more familiar recordings. In many instances much of his 'Fifties work had the edge on some of the uninspired 'Forties tracks, probably on account of revisiting some of the great old standards as performed with Buddy Cole. Given the material featured on the NEW TRICKS and SOME FINE OLD CHESTNUTS albums, most of the eventually released Ken Barnes radio material, to say nothing of recordings like "The Magic Window", "Say One For Me", "The Secret Of Christmas", and onward and ever upward, the HIGH SOCIETY / FANCY MEETING YOU HERE / BING & LOUIS sessions through to such masterful tracks like "Incurably Romantic" and "The Second Time Around" I find myself almost always either with Bing in the 'Thirties or in this much later period of his recording career. It would be a very brave person who, in a Crosby club magazine, dismissed the 1940's output as being less than his best; and I don't. It's just that most of us have our favourite era from which to choose. In a further programme Frank presented the one-time unreleased, rejected Take of "Learn To Croon", master B779-A. This will be appearing on a Jonzo CD in due course; but it was first heard, in very good quality, on the commercially released CBS 3-CD album BING CROSBY - THE CROONER - THE COLUMBIA YEARS, C3K 44229 which caused many of us to invest in a compact disc player about nine years ago. Finally, there were four excellent examples of Bing and the Andrews Sisters; "Ciribiribin", "The Three Caballeros", "Don't Fence Me In" and "Pistol Packin' Mama". Of this last recording Frank gave out the fascinating piece of information that the recording session began at 8 a.m. and by ten thirty it was committed to wax. Two and a half hours. These days it takes them that long to plug in the equipment; and too far less effect!

Bert Bishop

Keeping Track

A Compact Disc Review by Jim Reilly

It never ceases to amaze me that Bing CDs keep being produced and that there is always something new to report on. This time is no exception and we have some mouth watering goodies in the offing. We have the two Ken Barnes albums I spoke of in 'My Crystal Ball' section in the last issue; another in the Chronological series; more in the 'My Favorite' series from MCA (USA) and various others. There is also an album being produced by MCA (UK) to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Bing's passing. This CD came about due to the fine efforts of that Crosby stalwart Leslie Gaylor. I am proud to have been involved with Leslie, Stan White and Ernest Sutkowski in deciding on the album contents

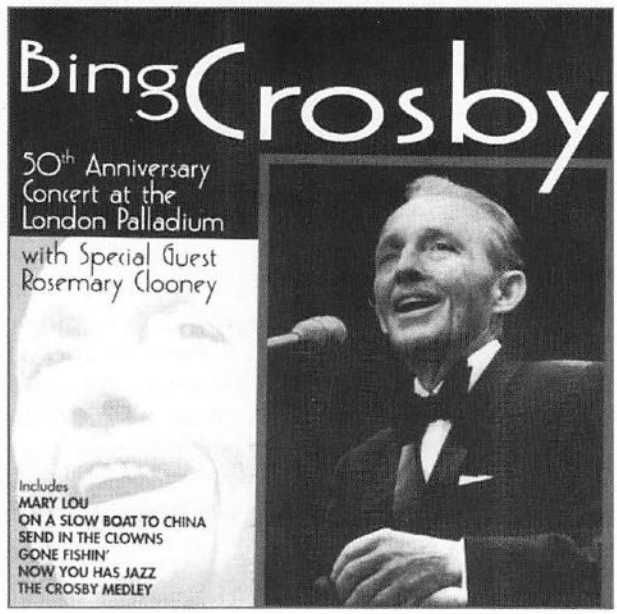
Bing Crosby 50th Anniversary Concert Live At The London Palladium with Special Guest Star Rosemary Clooney — **EMI - 7243 8 5754722** — **UK**

Orchestral Introduction
Where The Blue Of The Night
The Pleasure Of Your Company
Mary Lou
Where The Morning Glories Grow
At My Time Of Life
On A Slow Boat To China w Rosemary Clooney
By Myself - Rosemary Clooney
Tenderly - Rosemary Clooney
True Love w Mary Frances Crosby / Don't Fence In / Pennies From Heaven / Blue Hawaii / Sweet Leilani / Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral / Just One More Chance / Them There Eyes / Moonlight Becomes You / You Are My Sunshine / I'll Be Seeing You / The White Cliffs Of Dover / When The Lights Go On Again (All Over The World) / Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate The Positive / Please Baby Face / South Of The Border (Down

50 Ways To Leave Your Lover - R. Clooney
Send In The Clowns
Gone Fishin w Ted Rogers
Now You Has Jazz w Joe Bushkin
Joe Bushkin Medley:
The Man That Got Away / Hallelujah
Great Day
Just One Of Those Things - R. Clooney
The Crosby Medley: I Surrender Dear / Swinging On A Star / Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams / Mexico Way) / Galway Bay / Dinah / San Fernando Valley / I Found A Million Dollar Baby / San Antonio Rose / I'm An Old Cowhand / In A Little Spanish Town / Wait Till The Sun Shines Nellie w Kathryn Crosby / It's Easy To Remember / Blue Skies / It's Been A Long Long Time / Mississippi Mud / Ol' Man River
That's What Life Is All About
Orchestral Closing -
Where The Blue Of The Night (reprise)

Who could forget the marvellous evenings at the London Palladium seeing Bing performing on stage. What memories came to mind when Bing sang the medley of songs with the Joe Bushkin Quartet. Listening to this album takes me right back to those now far off Palladium days. Most of this material has been on LP for many years, but the tracks have been expertly re-mastered to make their CD debuts and I am sure you will like what you hear. It's only when you listen to the applause that you are reminded that these are not studio recordings. Bing is in great voice throughout, but never better than on his solo numbers with the Pete Moore Orchestra. Who could possibly listen to this album and say Bing had lost his magic. My favourite track is the big band swinger 'Great Day' (not included on the original album - Ken Barnes tells me that Bing only sang it in one show) and it makes a fine addition here. Rosemary Clooney's numbers are a real joy here and I particularly like '50 Ways To Leave Your Lover'. My thanks go to Ken Barnes for sending me a cassette of the album which enabled me to write these notes. This is an excellent quality album and in my opinion a must for all collectors. The ICC gets a nice plug in the accompanying booklet as well.

Running Time: 76:24 Price: £5.99 .



Scheduled for release in September

Bing Crosby The Complete United Artist Sessions EMI Gold Number not known UK

CD 1 That's What Life Is All About

That's What Life Is All About; We've Only Just Begun; The Best Things In Life Are Free; Great Day; A Little Love And Understanding; The More I See You; I Got Rhythm; No Time At All; Children; The Good Old Times; Cabaret; Send In The Clowns; Change Partners; Looking At You; Yours Sincerely; How Are Things In Glocca Morra; The Woman On Your Arm; Bon Vivant; When A Child Is Born; That's What Life Is All About (reprise)
Running Time: 62.37

CD 2 The Pleasure Of Your Company - Bing Crosby and some good companions, Fred Astaire - Rosemary Clooney - Johnny Mercer - Joe Bushkin - Kathryn Crosby- Harry Crosby and Bob Hope

The Pleasure Of Your Company w Johnny Mercer; Good Companions w Johnny Mercer; The Pleasure Of Your Company w Johnny Mercer; Intro. to The Way We Were; The Way We Were; Cuando Caliente El Sol; Sing w Crosby Family; You've Got A Friend w Harry Crosby; My Cup Runneth Over w Kathryn Crosby; A Song For You - Rosemary Clooney; Top Billing w Fred Astaire; Roxie w Fred Astaire; Pick Yourself Up w Fred Astaire; Sing w Fred Astaire; Mr Keyboard Man w Fred Astaire; How Lucky Can You Get w Fred Astaire; Spring Spring Spring w Fred Astaire; I've A Shooting Box In Scotland w Fred Astaire; In The Cool Cool Cool Of The Evening w Fred Astaire; A Couple Of Song And Dance Men w Fred Astaire; Top Billing w Fred Astaire; No Time At All; Session Sound Bites; Paris Holiday w Bob Hope; Nothing In Common w Bob Hope. Running Time: 77.27

CD 3 Come Share The Wine
Come Share The Wine; I Love To Dance Like They Used To Dance: Beautiful Memories; Hello Dolly; My Heart Stood Still; My Resistance Is Low; With A Song In My Heart; Breezin' Along With The Breeze; Razzle Dazzle; Have A Nice Day; Heat Wave; Something To Remember You By; I'll Never Fall In Love Again; What I Did For Love; Deja Vu; Some Sunny Day; Thou Swell; At My Time Of Life; The Only Way To Go. Running Time: 60.48
I was not in a position to review this three CD set fully, as I had only been privy to a few of the tracks. What I have heard is truly excellent; Bing's voice is well forward and the sound quality is great. All the tracks have been re-mastered and I am sure that this will rate as one of the top Bing collections. With 35 tracks new to CD, I must congratulate Ken Barnes and EMI for producing this long awaited set. The titles Bing recorded with Bob Hope for the album 'Paris Holiday' are an added bonus and make their debuts on CD. Rosemary Clooney sings 'A Song For You', omitted from the Palladium Concert CD. Listen out for the Session Sound Bites on disc 3 as I am sure you will enjoy them.

Scheduled for release in July
The Chronological Bing Crosby **Jonzo Records JZCD-13** **UK**
June 9, 1933 - September 27, 1933

Learn To Croon (B779-A)
Moonstruck
My Love
I've Got To Pass Your House (A)
I've Got To Pass Your House (B)
Blue Prelude (A)
Blue Prelude (B)
I Would If I Could But I Can't
Learn To Croon (B793-A)
Learn To Croon (B793-B)
Shadow Waltz
I've Got To Sing A Torch Song
I've Got To Sing A Torch Song (Reject)
There's A Cabin In The Pines
Down The Old Ox Road
Thanks
The Day You Came Along
I Guess It Had To Be That Way
Black Moonlight (A).
Black Moonlight (B)
Beautiful Girl
The Last Round Up
After Sundown
Home On The Range

It is great to see John McNicholas persevering with this series although he still needs the support from members for this important project to continue. The interesting inclusion on the album is the reject version of 'I've Got To Sing A Torch Song'. It is hard to believe that reject tracks like this can survive for 64 years, although I am not doubting the authenticity. This is a real find as it is not mentioned in either 'The A-Z Of Bing Crosby' or 'The Crosby Collection'. I enjoyed listening to the album contents and generally found the quality to be very good. There are one or two blemishes on tracks 1 and 9, 'Learn To Croon' although they do not detract from the overall quality. As far as I can ascertain the B take of 'I've Got To Pass Your House' makes its first appearance on CD as does 'Learn To Croon' (B793-A). The other titles have appeared on CD previously, but 'My Love', 'Shadow Waltz', 'There's A Cabin In The Pines' and 'I Guess It Had To Be That Way' have not had very great exposure. The CD is only available in the UK and the rest of Europe from Jonzo Records, PO Box 212, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 7DL. Price 10.60 including pp. (or two for £21). Cheques to be made payable to Jonzo Records. USA and Canadian members can obtain copies from Wig Wiggins (address inside front cover). Running Time 77:17

Scheduled for release in September
Bing Crosby (1903-1977) Memories **MCA MCAD Number Not Known** **UK**
20th Anniversary Commemorative Album

When The World Was Young
If You Love Me
In The Good Old Summertime
Walk Me By The River
Lost In Loveliness
I Didn't Slip I Wasn't Pushed I Fell
Indian Summer
The Girl With The Pigtails In Her Hair
Little Lady Make Believe
The Four Winds And The Seven Seas
Hello Young Lovers
Whistling In The Wildwood
Any Town Is Paris When You're Young
No Other Love
Friendly Mountains
I'll See You In My Dreams
Memories
When Mother Nature Sings Her Lullaby
Careless Hands
Smile Right Back At The Sun
The Girl Friend
Helpless
Who Gave You The Roses?
Why Can't You Behave?
Row Row Row
A Quiet Girl

When Leslie Gaylor asked me to act as the go-between with MCA on this album I was happy and honoured to do so. MCA asked me to submit my list of titles together with an audio cassette indicating the running order of the tracks. I had an almost free hand in selecting 26 titles from lists submitted by Leslie, Stan White, Ernest Sutkowski and myself. Both Leslie and Stan wanted me to include certain titles from their lists in my selections and MCA also requested that I use some well-known songs. With this in mind, I started my task by choosing

six titles from each of our lists and combining them to give a good overall mix for the CD. I used the song 'Memories' as my title track. Malcolm Macfarlane had also used this as a title track on a previously submitted list and I thought it would be rather appropriate for this commemorative album. I managed to get as many tracks as possible that hadn't previously appeared on CD in my final choice of titles. To enable me to make up the audio tape, Phil Clarke supplied me with copies of the titles not in my collection. MCA liked the proposals I submitted and gave their approval. At the time of writing these notes, most of the masters have been received from the States and Ken Barnes has been appointed to do the mastering re-mixes. Reserve titles could be used if any master is in too poor a condition to permit its use. MCA have said that the album will have world wide distribution and that they will also release it on cassette.

Bing Crosby - Love Songs **MCA Special Products MCAD20971** **USA**

The One I Love (Belongs To Somebody Else)
Temptation (1945)
The Kiss In Your Eyes
Oh! How I Miss You Tonight
Let Me Call You Sweetheart (1944)
My Melancholy Baby
I Surrender Dear (1939)
I'm Falling In Love With Someone
Just A Little Lovin' (Will Go A Long Way)
The Way You Look Tonight

This is a little gem of an album with excellent sound quality and the following tracks are new to CD:- 'The One I Love (Belongs To Somebody Else)', 'Temptation' (1945), 'The Kiss In Your Eyes', 'Oh How I Miss You Tonight' and 'Just A Little Lovin' (Will Go A Long Way)'. The sleeve is not the best I have ever seen and in my opinion could put people off buying the CD. Its a shame because its a great little disc.
Running Time: 28:25 Price $5.99

Bing Crosby - My Favorite Hawaiian Songs **MCA Special Products MCAD 21008** **USA**

Aloha Oe
Blue Hawaii
Hawaiian Paradise
Palace In Paradise
Dancing Under The Stars
Song Of The Islands
South Sea Island Magic
Sweet Leilani
My Isle Of Golden Dreams
When You Dream About Hawaii

We have here yet another of these budget priced MCA albums. With the exception of 'Blue Hawaii' and the much released 'Sweet Leilani' the tracks have had little exposure to compact disc. There will of course be nothing new for you if you have either of the two previously issued Hawaiian albums - 'Blue Hawaii' or 'Bing Crosby's Hawaii'. Nevertheless the quality is very good and its nice to see MCA still putting out new Bing CDs which are good value for money. This album has a particularly attractive sleeve.
Running Time: 30:18. Price $5.99

Bing Crosby - My Favorite Hymns **MCA Special Products MCAD21002** **USA**

He Leadeth Me
What A Friend We Have In Jesus
Rock Of Ages
All Hail The Power Of Jesus' Name
Holy, Holy, Holy
O God Our Help In Ages Past
Mother Dear, Oh Pray For Me
O Lord, I Am Not Worthy
The Bells Of St Mary's
The Peace Prayer Of St Francis

I appreciate that this may not be to everyone's taste, but I have long liked listening to Bing singing these religious songs. The LP 'Beloved Hymns' has always been a favourite of mine and I never expected to see it on CD. It is therefore very pleasing to see all eight titles appearing on CD for the first time together with 'The Bells Of St Mary's' and 'The Peace Prayer Of St Francis' in lovely sound quality. I congratulate MCA for releasing this album. Running Time: 34:54. Price $5.99

I understand from Charles Baillie that some of the MCA Special Products CDs are proving difficult to find in the States. If this is the case, American members should try ordering these CDs from Footlight Records of New York. Address: Footlight Records, 113 E. 12th St., New York, N.Y. 10003. Phone: (212) 533-1572 Fax: (212) 673-1496. I am sure that you all know that Charles Baillie is the reviewing editor for BINGANG magazine. I know that some of these CDs can be obtained from Tower Records, Piccadilly, London. They are however, very expensive at £15.99 each and this does not include postage.

Bing Sings Country **Hallmark 306722** **UK**

You Are My Sunshine
Along The Navajo Trail w The Andrews Sisters
San Fernando Valley
I'm An Old Cowhand
Ridin' Down The Canyon
Prairieland Lullaby
Whistling In The Wildwood
Take Me Back To My Boots And Saddle
Silver On The Sage
Pistol Packin' Mama w The Andrews Sisters
Twilight On The Trail
Along The Santa Fe Trail
Sierra Sue
Legend Of Old California
Tumbling Tumbleweeds
The Singing Hills

Empty Saddles
El Rancho Grande
Sioux City Sue
The Last Round-Up

This is the fourth Bing country album and for all that, it still has a couple of tracks new to CD; 'Whistling In The Wildwood' and 'Prairieland Lullaby'. 'Legend Of Old California' has only made one previous appearance on a compilation of Harry Warren songs. One wonders how much profit a record company can make when they sell CDs for only 2.99. Still at this price we can't complain as the quality is perfectly acceptable, although some tracks have a bit too much echo for my liking. Running Time: 59:29

A Portrait Of Bing Crosby (2CDs) **Galleri Gale 403** **UK**

CD 1 Please; How Deep Is The Ocean; Dancing In The Dark; Sentimental And Melancholy; On The Sentimental Side; Don't Be That Way; Blue Hawaii; Silver On The Sage; Song Of The Islands; The Last Round-Up; Black Moonlight; Someday Sweetheart; I've Got The World On A String; Did You Ever See A Dream Walking; Dinah; Brother Can You Spare A Dime; Pennies From Heaven; Down The Old Ox Road; Maybe; In My Merry Oldsmobile; Moonlight Becomes You; Remember Me; Its Easy To Remember
Running Time: 73:01

CD 2 Sweet And Lovely; Too Romantic; This Is My Night To Dream; Temptation; Stardust; Sweet Leilani; I'm An Old Cowhand; Goodnight Sweetheart; The Funny Old Hills; Too Marvellous For Words; Out Of Nowhere; I Don't Stand A Ghost Of A Chance With You; An Apple For The Teacher; Sweet Georgia Brown; If You Should Ever Need Me; Still The Bluebird Sings; Were You Sincere; Sing A Song Of Sunbeams; You're Getting To Be A Habit With Me; Only Forever; You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby; The Moon Got In My Eyes; White Christmas

There is nothing special about this double album as all the titles have appeared on CD many times before with perhaps the exception of 'This Is My Night to Dream'. This set is very similar to the Australian release 'The Bing Crosby Collection' although it has a number of different titles and a few extra tracks. It is a nice collection of Bing's standards; the quality is good and it makes enjoyable listening if you want these titles yet again on CD.
Running Time: 72:40. Price: £6.49

Bing Crosby Members Edition **TKO UAB 30532** **EEC**

Swinging On A Star
Amor
I'll Be Seeing You
Jeepers Creepers - non Bing
Moonlight Becomes You
Don't Fence Me In
Sleigh Ride In July
Lady Be Good
I Got Rhythm
Gypsy In My Soul
St Louis Blues
Chattanoogie Shoe Shine Boy
Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate The Positive
Is You Is Or Is You Ain't (Ma Baby)
You Got Me Where You Want Me
I'll Get By
Speak To Me Of Love- non Bing
The Day After Forever
Swanee River
Its Easy To Remember
I Promise You
It's Love Love Love

This CD turned up just as I was about to put my reviews in the post to Malcolm. I therefore had a very quick listen to it and can tell you that the sound quality is good. Two of the tracks are non Bing but apart from this it is a very nice CD. The material is from a mixture of radio shows with the majority of the applause well edited out. It has a photo of Bing on the disc and this same photo also appears on the inside of the back liner. Running Time: 55:25 Price: £7.49

Rosemary Clooney
Something To Remember Me By **Jasmine Records JASCD 335** **UK**

This Can't Be Love
Half As Much
Tenderly
Zing A Little Zong w Bing
Who Kissed Me Last Night?
You'll Never Know
The Merry-Go-Run-Around w Bing
Blues In The Night
I Do, I Do, I Do
Chicago Style w Bing
South Rampart Street Parade w Bing
Lovely Weather For Ducks
Something To Remember You By w Bing
Haven't Got A Worry To My Name
It's Only A Paper Moon w Bing
Only Forever w Bing
Lonely Am I
You're From Kentucky Sure As You're Born
Medley w Bing: These Foolish Things / We Just Couldn't Say Good-bye / You'd Be So Nice To Come Home To
Its A Most Unusual Day
You're Just In Love w Bing
Bad News
You Make Me Feel So Young
Man And Woman w Bing
Tomorrow I'll Dream And Remember

I am indebted to Barry Whittingham for letting me know about this CD. The quality is excellent and it is a very playable album that makes a great addition to my collection. I think that this is an inspired selection of titles

by none other than Geoff Milne. Geoff also wrote the informative sleeve notes All the material is from Chesterfield and GEC radio shows 1952 - 1954. The ten Bing duets are a positive joy to hear and I really think that this is the best Bing and Rosie CD to have been produced to date. Rosemary Clooney is also in terrific voice. Let's have some more please, Geoff.
Running Time: 71:07 Price: £9.99.

Thanks For The Memories/Merry Christmas 2CD MCA MCD-73017 Australia
I recently learnt of this double set which on first sight looks as if it is just a re-packaging of two previously released CDs with the same names. 'Thanks For The Memories' is the same as MCA (Australia) MCAD 312270. It is interesting to see the song title on this album reproduced as 'Where The Blue Of The Night (Meets The Cold Of The Day)'. The 'Merry Christmas' album is almost identical to MCA MCAD 31143 (USA and Australia) but this version includes the added track 'The Small One' (making its debut on compact disc).

Harry Lillis - Lillis, Love And A Little Covered Wagon HLYCD004/5 Limited Collectors Edition
I have now had the pleasure of listening to this double album and consider it to be the best in the Harry Lillis series. The mix of tracks is excellent and the stereo sound quality makes this a marvellous acquisition. The list of titles appeared in BING 115. I have been able to obtain a few more copies if anyone still requires a copy.

The Best Of Burns And Allen (cassette only) Hedder Headline Audio Books HH686 UK
This two-cassette set contains four Burns and Allen shows and includes the show recently broadcast on BBC Radio 2 in which Bing was the guest. I think that the guests appearing in the other shows are James Mason and Al Jolson.
Price: £8.99

Mainly For Our American Members
The Best Of Old Time Radio - Radio Yesteryear, Box C. Sandy Hook, CT06482, USA
25 CDs containing some interesting Bing material are now available from this mail order outlet. I understand that the company doesn't trade outside of the USA so it is no use UK members sending for these CDs. I am unable to comment on the sound quality of the programmes as I haven't heard any of them myself and don't know of anyone else who has done so. Each CD is priced at $16.95 which is rather expensive for a CD of only an hour's duration. The price doesn't include shipping costs which are extra. Most of the CDs listed contain two half hour programmes. It is also possible to purchase the shows on tape for the more reasonable price of $4.98 per cassette.

Ref. No. 2 **The New Swan Show**
Dec 7 1948 with Bob Hope, guest Bing Crosby plus
The George Burns And Gracie Allen Show - No Bing
Ref. No 135 **The Bing Crosby Show**
December 14 1949 Guest Jimmy Stewart plus
The Bing Crosby Show Dec. 28 1949 Guest Al Jolson
Ref. No 232 **The Bell Telephone Hour**
July 2 1945 with Bing Crosby plus
March 22, 1948 with Arthur Rubinstein - no Bing
Ref. No 798 **Command Performance**
AFRS #125 host Jack Benny Bing guests with others
AFRS #124 Non Bing
Ref. No 1075 1949 **Savings Bond Show**
1 hour programme -Bing guests with others
Ref. No 1211 **The Gulf Screen Guild Theatre**
February 5 1939 A revue with Bing and others
November 19 1939 - Non Bing
Ref. No 1317 **The Bing Crosby Show**
January 4 1950 Guest Al Jolson
January 11 1950 Guest Groucho Marx
Ref. No 1544 **Philco Radio Time**
November 3 1948 Guest Edgar Bergen
plus The Mel Blanc Show - Non Bing
Ref. No 1785 **The Kraft Music Hall**
November 30 1944 Guest Eugenie Baird
December 7 1944 Guest Diana Lynn
Ref. No. 8 **Command Performance**
AFRS #104 with Bing.
A Salute To Bing Crosby
January 9, 1951
Ref. No. 78 **Lux Radio Theatre**

Ref. No 43 **Philco Radio Time**
May 12 1948 Guest Henry Fonda plus
May 19 1948 Guest Ethel Merman
Ref. No 151 **Philco Radio Time**
February 12 1947 Guest Groucho Marx plus
February 19 1947 Guest Judy Garland
Ref. No 721 **G I Journal**
American Forces Radio Service #31 host Bing Crosby
American Forces Radio Service #48 host Bing Crosby
Ref. No 804 **Christmas Command Performance Part 1**
December 25 1948 -Bing guests with others
Ref. No 805 **Christmas Command Performance Part 2**
December 25 1948 - Bing guests with others
Ref. No 1294 **The Kraft Music Hall**
January 2 1943 Bing with Ginny Simms and Frank McHugh
Command Performance Sep. 11, 1948 - Non Bing
Ref. No 1417 **A Salute To Bing Crosby**
January 7 1951 Liberty Broadcasting System
A one hour show celebrating 20 years of Bing Crosby as a star
Ref. No 1552 **Duffy's Tavern**
December 7 1943 - Guest Bing
December 14 1943 - Non Bing
Ref. No 1877 **The Walgreen Birthday Party**
June 10 1945 A one hour 7th War Loan variety show with Bing, Rochester, Andrews Sisters, Rise Stevens and others
Ref. No. 36 **Maxwell House Coffee Time**
December 4, 1947 with George Burns and Bing plus
September 30, 1948 - no Bing.
Ref. No. 83 **Philco Radio Time**
Jan. 8, 1947 - guest Mickey Rooney

Sept. 24, 1951 - one hour special with Bing and others
Ref. No. 915 **The Jack Benny Show**
April 4, 1948 - guest Bing plus
March 28, 1948 - non Bing
Ref. No. 1734 **The Bob Hope Show**
Oct. 23, 1949 - guest Bing, plus
The Pepsodent Show April 2, 1946 - non Bing
Jan. 29, 1947 - guests Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour.
Ref. No. 1632 **The Jack Benny Show**
Feb. 15, 1953 guest Bing, plus
Sept. 13, 1953 - non Bing

Please note that the dates shown are from the latest Radio Yesteryear catalogue and I have not checked to see if they are correct. The reference numbers shown are from the same catalogue.

GUEST APPEARANCES:

The Andrews Sisters (3CDs) Readers Digest/MCA Special Products USA
Their Greatest Hits And Finest Performances RC7-190-1 MSD3-35877-1,2,3
CD1 No Bing content CD2 Don't Fence Me In; Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate The Positive; Pistol Packin' Mama; Along The Navajo Trail; South America Take It Away; Sparrow In The Tree Top; Route 66; Cool Water; Is You Is Or Is You Ain't (Ma Baby); Hot Time In The Town Of Berlin (When The Yanks Go Marching In) CD3 Vict'ry Polka; Anything You Can Do w Dick Haymes; There's No Business Like Show Business w Dick Haymes
I am told that the sound quality is excellent overall, although some of the older tracks have minor hiss.

Bring Me Sunshine (5CD Set) Readers Digest RDCD 1331/5 UK
4 Bing Tracks: Gone Fishin w Louis Armstrong (CD1); The Spaniard That Blighted My Life w Al Jolson (CD2); Busy Doing Nothing w (CD4) and Road To Morocco w Bob Hope (CD4)

Closer Than A Kiss - Crooner Classics Rhino R2 72515 USA
18 Tracks (1 Bing) Around The World

Blues In The Night -The Johnny Mercer Songbook Vogue 31455 32682 USA
16 Tracks (1 Bing) Jeepers Creepers w Buddy Bregman's Orchestra

Cigar Classics (4CDs) Hip-o Records HIPD 40037 USA
Four CDs covering vocalists, standards, jazz and more contemporary music (1 Bing) Don't Fence Me In with The Andrews Sisters. The package is multi-coloured and cigar box in appearance.

The Glory Of Love - 1930 Ballads Essex Entertainment JCD- 7017 USA
14 Tracks (1 Bing) Pennies From Heaven

Happy Days Are Here Again (1930s Pop Hits) Essex Entertainment JCD-7005 USA
14 Tracks (2 Bing) Bob White and Alexander's Ragtime Band, both with Connie Boswell

Juke Box Saturday Night (1940s Pop Hits)Essex Entertainment JCD-7009 USA
14 Tracks (1 Bing) Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate The Positive with The Andrews Sisters

Fever (1950s Pop Hits) Essex Entertainment JCD- 7003 USA
14 Tracks (1 Bing) Play A Simple Melody with Gary Crosby

That's Hollywood - The Songs
(Songs from Hollywood Films) Essex Entertainment JCD- 7011 USA
14 Tracks (2 Bing) Swinging On A Star and In The Cool Cool Cool Of The Evening

Puttin' On The Ritz (1930s Pop Hits) Essex Entertainment JCD- 7012 USA
14 Tracks (1 Bing) Sweet Leilani

The Essex Entertainment CDs and audio cassettes (prefix JCT instead of JCD) are available in USA by mail order only. Address: Essex Entertainment, 560 Sylvan Avenue, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632

Rosemary Clooney - Some Of The Best Laser Light 12633 USA
12 tracks (1 Bing) On A Slow Boat To China - duet with Bing

Peggy Lee - Some Of The Best Laser Light 12641 USA
13 tracks (1 Bing) Its A Good Day - duet with Bing and Golden Earrings, introduced by Bing

Peggy Lee - More Of The Best Laser Light 12642 USA
12 tracks (1 Bing) Baby You Can Count On Me - duet with Bing

Paul Whiteman - The King Of Jazz ASV Living Era CDAJA5170 UK
18 Tracks (4 Bing) Louisiana; You Took Advantage Of Me; Makin' Whoopee and Happy Feet

Jazz Greats Series These were originally on sale at most good newsagents.
I have been told by member Mr G Marshall of Southampton (thank you for the information) that there are other issues in this series, each having one Bing track. These are as follows:
No. 9 Your Socks Don't Match; **No. 10** From Monday On **No. 14** Yes Indeed.
Swing Celebration Santa Claus Is Coming To Town. *Back Issues should still be available from Marshall Cavendish, PO Box 1, Hastings, East Sussex TN35 4TJ. For more details also see BING 115.*

FROM MY CRYSTAL BALL

I reported last time around that I had heard of a new double CD to be issued to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Bing's passing and I am sorry to tell you that this does not look like coming to fruition. It's all getting pretty cloudy - so no more predictions from me for the time being.

Again, I wish to thank those members who took the trouble to let me know of new releases. As always I appreciate your help. Good listening until next time.

Jim Reilly

ANNOUNCEMENT

The International Crosby Circle
32ND ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

MANSION HOUSE, ROUNDHAY PARK, LEEDS
SUNDAY OCTOBER 5TH 1997 3 PM - 10 PM

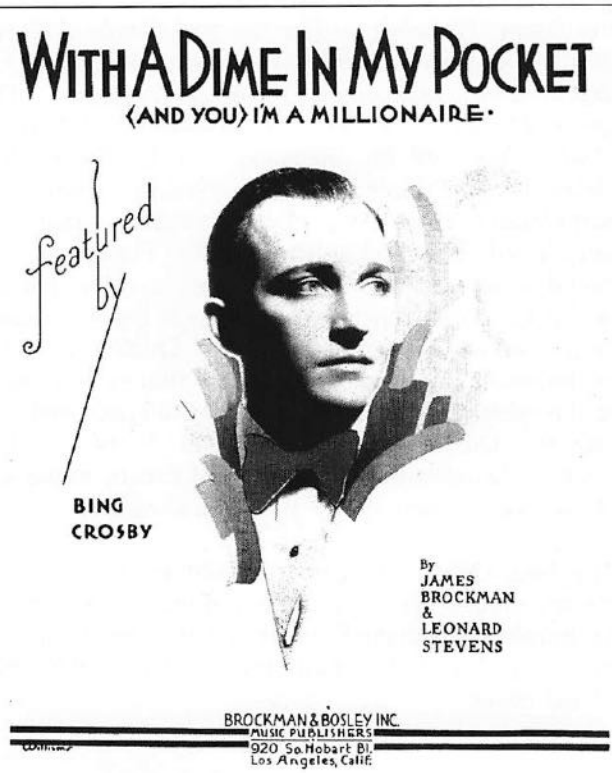
A cordial and warm invitation is extended to all ICC members, their partners and friends to attend our forthcoming meeting and dinner in the attractive setting of Roundhay Park, Leeds

The dinner menu will be :

Minestrone soup with parmesan
Roast leg of lamb with red currant glaze and mint jelly
Warm apple strudel with sauce anglaise
Coffee and mints

Please book by sending a cheque for £14 to Michael Crampton.
Tickets will be available for collection at the meeting.
Accommodation can be obtained by contacting Rydal Bank Hotel

(Tel. 0113 266 1178)



SOMEBODY ELSE IS TAKING MY PLACE
by DICK HOWARD, BOB ELLSWORTH and RUSS MORGAN
Bing Crosby
MADE IN U.S.A.
SHAPIRO, BERNSTEIN & CO. INC.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAY

Not too many press cuttings about Bing in the last few months, so we have taken the opportunity to reproduce two old newspaper articles featuring Bing. The first was sent in to us by Clive Menadue.

May 22nd. 1950.
DAILY TELEGRAPH & MORNING POST.

2000 Greet Bing Crosby.

Gay practise round at St. Andrews.

Bing Crosby, the American singer and film actor, yesterday played his first and only practise round at St. Andrews over the Eden course in preparation for the amateur golf championship, which begins today. He was followed by a crowd of 2000. Most of the spectators were young boys and girls. Many of them asked him to sign their autograph books; others tried to speak to him or even touch his clothing. He wore a canary coloured pullover, a brown cardigan, and over that a second maroon coloured pullover; and brown crocodile leather shoes. On his head was an unconventional knitted bonnet of white and black.

Unaware of his plans, the authorities had provided no crowd control arrangements. His admirers crowded round him so closely that he had to clear a way for himself and his two partners to play from the first tee. The partners were the two French entrants in the amateur championship-M. Baglieno and the Vicomte de St. Sauveur, husband of the British woman's golf champion, who won the title last week at Newcastle, Co. Down. Though hemmed in on all sides and scarcely able to take a step Bing Crosby remained cool and good natured. He chatted to the young people about their schools and kept everybody in good humour with his wise-cracks. Girls crowded and jostled one another to walk along beside the singer between shots. Some of the spectators had obviously never seen a golf course before and walked through carefully raked bunkers and over greens.

On one occasion when the Vicomte asked," Shall I take wood?" Crosby replied," Hit it with a whole tree." The atmosphere was one of gaiety. Bing Crosby, to give the crowd their full measure of entertainment and golf, did a high - step dance before playing his last shot to the 18th. He laid the ball three yards from the pin, holing out in a birdie three. A questioner asked him:" You don't think you are going to win?" He replied:" Oh no, not unless Mr. Wilson, my opponent, is a very bad golfer."
(Editor: On the day itself, Bing lost 3 and 2 to Jim Wilson in front of large crowds. By coincidence, Peter Murray sent us a press cutting of the event which we now reproduce on the next page. Amazing that two items like this should surface from two different members at about the same time.)
The second extract comes from the New Orleans Times-Picayune of Saturday, September 11th, 1976 and it was discovered by Lionel Pairpoint.

Crosby Creates Show Biz Classic With Hirt And Fountain

It was one of those classic show business moments, Bing Crosby crooning, Al Hirt tooting and Pete Fountain fingering his clarinet. All under the gleeful gaze of 1800 plus persons who attended Friday night's Gala Archdiocesan Charities Ball at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Crosby was the headliner for the $100 a plate charity event and Hirt and Fountain were plain customers but the three joined musical forces for one number, "Down the Mississippi", creating an entertainment delight that New Orleansians rarely have the opportunity to view, these days. With his voice as distinctively rich as ever, Crosby was in top form to compete with the musical ways of Hirt and Fountain. The number which came mid-way in a spectacular medley of tunes by Crosby brought a standing ovation. The swank evening kicked off with a gourmet dinner that included tournedos, wild rice and broccoli plus champagne and assorted wines and liquors but it was only a prelude to the "gourmet" entertainment served afterwards by "Der Bingle". Accompanied by a jazz quartet, Crosby performed solo for more than sixty minutes, belting out a series of old and new tunes that turned out to be as tasty a treat as the dinner itself. He also chatted with the audience, telling a few stories about his career. His best number came early in the act - "Send in the Clowns" - that haunting, touching, Steven Sondheim composition from Broadway's "A Little Night Music". Other songs included, "The Way We Were", "Gone Fishin'" and "At My Time of Life", a new song from the musical "Great Expectations" which is based on the Charles Dickens novel but the grand finale of Crosby's performance was a medley of two dozen or more tunes that included, "Swinging on a Star", "True Love", "Don't Fence Me In", "Pennies from Heaven", "I Surrender Dear", "You Are My Sunshine" "I'll Be Seeing You", "Way Down Yonder In New Orleans" (which not surprisingly, drew lots of applause). Crosby was introduced by Archbishop Philip Hannan. The Archdiocese could not have picked a more imposing performer to launch its yearly benefit event. Crosby's long awaited appearance in New Orleans - his first performance here ever - should earn him even more fans at the seasoned age of 72. Beyond the material, there was the familiar voice, which was its best and the impeccable delivery that sky-rocketed Crosby to the status of an entertainment giant - now and always.

The New Orleans concert was not mentioned in the Crosby magazines of the time and we thank Lionel for his diligent investigation work. By the way, I guess that the song "Down the Mississippi" was probably "Basin Street Blues".

Brian Ford sent me a cutting from Saga Magazine for March 1997 as it contained an article by Michael Parkinson entitled 'People in My Life'. The following comes from it:

...The only other person I know who travelled free by cab in London was Bing Crosby. We sent a limousine to pick him up at his hotel and bring him to the Television Centre. The driver rang up in a panic to say that Mr Crosby had jumped into a cab. When the great man arrived I asked him why he had chosen a cab instead of a luxury car.

"I like cabs," he said. I don't know why but I decided to pursue the matter.
"What is it you like about them?" I said.
"Well," he said, "the drivers know what they are doing, they are very friendly and I must admit that in all the time I have been using them I have never had to pay a fare."
I said he had just defined the difference between being famous and a superstar. Then a doubt crept into my mind. "There must have been the odd occasion when you got in the cab and the driver didn't know who you were?"
"Sure it happened, but when it did I took care of it," said Bing.
"How?" I asked.
"Well," he said, "if I thought the driver wasn't sure, I pushed back that little window dividing us and sang three bars of 'White Christmas'. After that, he knew who he had in the back of the cab."

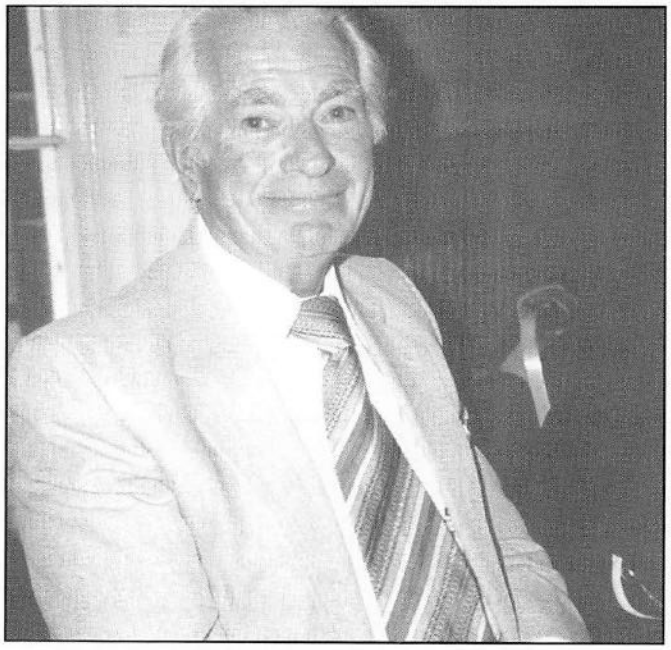
ON THAT DAY..

NOT only one of the all-time great singers, Bing Crosby was well known for his passion for golf.

He and former screen partner Bob Hope burned up many a course in their time. Our shot shows Bing strolling onto the first tee at St Andrew's for the 1950 Amateur Championship, on one of his frequent visits to Scotland.

WHAT'S IN A NAME

We welcome back to our pages the previously-mentioned Ralph Harding who is indeed a keen traveller to places in the USA. Ralph's personal views are always direct and we apologise in advance to our friends in the USA who like hominy grits! President Eisenhower used to like them too until Bing asked the folks back home to send him some during WWII.



Are you a compulsive hummer of songs? And do songs tend to remind you of people you've known and places you've been? Over the century that songs have been recorded, there have been some pretty remarkable numbers which talk about place names - and somehow American towns, cities and states seem to have the edge over their British counterparts. "Do you know the way to Hartlepool?" doesn't quite have the same ring as the original USA San Jose version. In the same way, "Route 66" sounds a lot better than "M25 Orbital"! Carrying on the theme of place-names in songs, we look at a few which Bing has recorded...

Route 66 (Get Your Kicks On) L.4177-A - Recorded 11 May 1946
Perhaps the quintessential 'place-names' song, Route 66 has been in the repertoire of just about every band that ever took up a microphone. After the standard versions which include Chuck Berry and the Rolling Stones, we've all tried to learn the names of the towns and cities along the road that "Winds from Chicago to LA". There have even been TV documentaries and commercials made, complete with helpful maps, showing us where Flagstone, Arizona, Joplin and Gallup, New Mexico are located. Can you remember all the place-names stretching "over 2,000 miles all of the way"? However in these modern times Route 66 has been superseded by Interstate Highways 55, 44 and 40 for faster travel, although from personal experience the speed limit is still restricted to 55 mph. Bing and the Andrew Sisters have recorded an excellent version of this famous song.

Tallahassee L.4397-A - Recorded 26 March 1947
The capital city of Florida "and the Southland at its best". We drove through at noon and it was hot, sticky and raining. I saw no land "kinda green and grassy" and didn't hear "blue jays chirping high and sassy". In fact Tallahassee looked like any other American city.

Apalachicola, FLA L.4576-A - Recorded 25 November 1947
Lying South of Bay City in Apalachicola Bay, this is one town I have never visited. Once again a song that includes many places including Puget Sound, Devil's Lake, Virginia Beach, Coney Island, Sweetwater, New Orleans and places I couldn't find in the Rand McNally. Hominy grits mentioned in the lyrics consist of a coarsely ground grain often used a protein supplement and served at breakfast as "grits an' gravy". Diners please note - it's revolting! Choose the hash browns with your ham and eggs instead.

Miami (Moon Over Miami) - KMH 6 February 1936 (Program 10) and 27 February 1936 (Program 13)
I spent several weeks in Miami and stayed at the Carillon Hotel on Collins Avenue. A multi-racial city, Miami consists of the very rich section and the ghetto (for want of a better word). The only time we decided to explore Miami landed us lost in a very highly undesirable section. So we stayed based in our luxury suite overlooking the Fonteinbleu (pronounced Fountain Blow by the locals) which I was told is controlled by Mafia interests. A cruise on the "Jungle Queen" through the numerous back waters from Fort Lauderdale, took us past the mansions and palaces of the multi-millionaires and their ocean-going liners. And a trip through the Everglades is not to be missed.

Kokomo, Indiana W.73912-A - Recorded 12 May 1947
We missed Kokomo when we drove from Richmond, Virginia to Saginaw, Michigan by about thirty miles. We were on Interstate 69 and Kokomo lies on 31. But we didn't miss much because Kokomo is pretty small and if you blink you could miss it. Indiana University is probably the most famous part of this small town.

Avalon L.9940
Recorded 14 March 1957
Avalon Town (CBS "Ford Road Show")
Avalon, situated on Santa Catalina Island in the San Pedro Channel about twenty miles from Long Beach, California is famous for its undersea gardens and the location for Bing's film "We're Not Dressing" with Carole Lombard. Bing sings about how he found his love there and then left her but one line of the song remained a mystery to me for many years. Why is Avalon beside Mr Wrigley's Bay (presumably of chewing gum fame) when there is no bay on Catalina? The answer I discovered was because William Wrigley Jr (of the Chicago chewing-gum dynasty) built the sumptuous art deco Avalon Casino in the Twenties.

Hawaii (A Song of Old Hawaii, DLA.2014-A recorded 1 July 1940) and several other songs.
In his book, Bing describes how he fell in love with the Islands when he was on location filming "Waikiki Wedding", and having spent two weeks on Waikiki Beach by the capitol of Oahu, Honolulu, I can well understand why. I have so many wonderful memories and on arrival at the airport, a beautiful dusky maiden embraces you and hangs a lei around your neck. I have a large framed photo to prove it!
Iowa L.3458-A recorded 17 July 1944 for commercial issue but the most interesting version was recorded by Bing with the Orchestra conducted by Major Meredith Willson for the AFRS "Mail Call". After two unsuccessful attempts resulting in Bing fluffing the opening chorus ("We're lost man, we'd better start over"... "Why don't you come over to the studio and rehearse me on these things or mebbe shoot dice too"), Bing admits he never learned to read music ("Why didn't I go to school and learn to read. If I'd ever learned to read music!"). Finally, Bing makes a perfect recording and ends by shouting "I made it, I made it!". Diana and I drove from South Carolina to Saginaw in Michigan, via Kentucky and Indiana and intended to visit Davenport, Cedar Rapids and other cities in Iowa but after two days driving, we gave Iowa a miss.

And finally, here's a few more place names that Bing sings in his songs for commercial records or in his radio shows:
Across The Wide Missouri, Missouri Waltz: Alabamy Bound: Atchison, Topeka And The Santa Fe: Back home Again in Indiana: Can't Get Indiana Off My Mind: Belle of Albuquerque: Betsy from Pike: Between 18th and 19th. On Chestnut Street: Black Ball Ferry Line: Blueberry Hill: Bojangles of Harlem: Boise, Idaho: California Moon (here i come): Carolina In The Morning: Carry Me Back To Old Virginny: Chattanooga Choo Choo: Chattanogie Shoe Shine Boy: Chicago Style: Connecticut: Deep In The Heart Of Texas: Down By The Ohio, Dreamsville Ohio: An Evening In Caroline: Georgia On My Mind: Going Hollywood: I Got A Gal In Kalamazoo: It's About Time I Wrote the Folks In Terre Haute: Kentucky Babe: Louisiana: Manhattan: Memphis Blues: Michigan: Mississippi (mud and moon): My Old Kentucky Home: Nevada: Ohio: Oklahoma Hail: On Behalf of the Visiting Firemen (from all sorts of places!): On The Banks of the Wabash: On the 10-10 From Ten-Ten-Tennessee: On Treasure Island: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: Red River Valley: Rose of Santa Rosa: Sailing Down the Chesapeake Bay: St.. Louis Blues: San Antonio Rose: San Fernando Valley: Shuffle Off To Buffalo: Sierra Sue: Sioux City Sue: South Rampart Street Parade: Swanee River: Tennessee Waltz: There's a Fella Waiting in Poughkeepsie: There's a Girl in the Heart of Maryland: Virginia lee: Wabash Cannonball: When the Moon Comes Over Madison Square: When the Swallows Come Back to Capistrano: Where is Central Park?: Where the Surf Meets the Turf Down at Old Del Mar: and so on ad infinitum!

I'm sure there are others that I haven't thought of, but I was intrigued by Bing's song 'Rhythm On The River' in which he sings "In New York, Spokane, Split Lip or any town" and I searched in my American Gazetteer for Split Lip. Does it exist? There's a Broken Bow in Nebraska and Oklahoma and a Broken Arrow. In the song 'Clementine', Bing mentioned Gene Autry. Well, there is a Clementine and a town named Gene Autry in Oklahoma. And we once stayed in a motel at a place named Andy Devine. I think you will agree that a Gal in Kalamazoo sounds more glamorous than a popsie in Oldham!

Ralph Harding

Talking of Oldham .....

A LANCASHIRE LAD DISCOVERS BING

New member Ken Ward takes us back in time.

I was born in the early 20s in a village called Waterloo, which lies between Oldham and Ashton-under-Lyne. I was born into a very poor working class family. My mother and uncles all worked in the cotton mills, which was the main industry in Lancashire in those days. Needless to say, when I became 14 and left school, I went in the mill as a lift boy working in the warehouse. My job was to go up in the lift to the different floors and pick up the finished baskets of cotton cops, (these are similar to bobbins - the cotton was spun on to these), and take them down to the warehouse for weighing and testing, then packed off in skips for shipping.

I had a colleague the same age as me called Bert who was a nice lad except he tended to boast a little. He was always on about playing gramophone records. His parents owned a shop and were a little up market, hence they could afford a gramophone. Each day Bert would go on about what records he had played the night before and it started to get on my nerves. The warehouse manager obviously saw my discomfort and called me to one side.
"Would you like a gramophone, Ken?", he asked.
"I would but I can't afford one" I replied.
"Call at our house tonight and I'll give you one."
"Are you kidding? " I asked.
"No" he replied, "We have one and we never use it."

After work, I was at his house before he was. When he came up the path, he saw me and said, "Come for your gramophone then?"
"Yes please".

He went into the house and came back with this box-like thing. "Ah, there you are. Do you think you'll be able to carry it?"

It was about 3 miles home, and it nearly killed me getting it home, but I did. My mother said "Wherever have you got that from?"
"Mr. Marsland gave it to me."
"That was very kind" Mum said, "put it on the end of the sideboard, and let's have a look".

I lifted the lid and my eyes opened wide! I saw this round

thing with green felt on it, and a funny looking chrome plated arm with a round thing on the end. There were also two little chrome dishes that were set in the top. I looked at my mum in bewilderment. She smiled and said, "The round plate is for putting your records on, and the round thing is where you put the needles which you keep in the little dishes. You wind it up, start it and then put the round thing on the record and it plays. All you need now is a record."

Friday came around and I was given my wage. Mum used to let me open it and take out my spending money, providing I left the slip in the packet. I dashed off to Ashton where I knew of this shop on Penny Meadow that sold a few records. I went inside, it was very dark. There was just a counter and an old man came out of the back. "What dos tha want", he said.
I thought for a minute, I had heard people talk about somebody called Bing. "Have you any Bing records," I blurted out.
He peered at me " Dost tha know there's a war on", he said "Them records have to come from America, and food comes before records."
"Don't you have any then" I said, walking towards the door.
"Hang on a minute young un, come back here wi thi." He stared, "tha looks like a reet enough lad" he said reaching under the counter. He came up with a record that was in a brown sleeve. It was full of dust, he blew it a couple of times to clean it, handed it to me, "that's a tanner", he said.
"Is it a Bing?
"Aye" he said "But dunno tell onybody weer tha geet it from, un mind that Cart Road when theh gus out, dunno get thisel knocked down, ah dunna want thi mother comin here playin hell wi me, come in next week an ah'l save any more that ah get."
I ran home and handed the record to Mum. She looked at it, smiled and said, "Please, Bing Crosby, that's a lovely song, play it." I played it and listened in amazement when he belted out "Ah Please." I literally jumped and from that day to this I was hooked.

The old man kept his word, and would have one for me every week, 'Temptation', 'How Deep is the Ocean', 'Skylark', 'Hang Your Heart on a Hickory Limb', 'I Cried For You', 'Trade Winds' and many more. When I reached my 17th Birthday, I volunteered for the army. When I told the old man, he said, "Look after thisel young un, dunna go un get thisel kilt."
"I won't." I said cheerio, that was the last time I saw the old man. By the time I came out of the Army after the war, the old man was dead, and the shop had gone. To make matters worse, my collection of records had gone. I never bothered really after that, until I retired, then the nostalgic pangs began to tug, and I started collecting again.....

Ken Ward

ONCE IN A WHILE

Jack Halloran died in January after a stroke. He was 81. Originally a singer with a male quartet, he became a choral director for films, records and television working with Roy Rogers, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Bing. He was with Dean Martin on the latter's TV show for nine years. Jack worked with Bing on the singalong albums of the early 1960s and also he collaborated on the 'I Wish You a Merry Christmas' album recorded by Bing in 1962 and on the 'A Time to be Jolly' album from 1970/71.

Lost Lyrics

In the last edition of BING, we appealed for help regarding the song 'One Fleeting Hour' which Bing attempted to recall from his youth on two 1970s TV shows. George Patmore came up with the answer after diligent research at Shrewsbury Reference Library through books issued by the BBC Music Library. George discovered that the song did exist and he then contacted the BBC direct and they kindly sent him a copy of the sheet music. George has given me a copy also and I see that the song was copyrighted in 1915. The words were by Karl Fuhrmann with the music by Dorothy Lee. The lyrics are as follows:

"When the twilight of eve dims the sun's last ray
And the shades of the night gather fast,
There is one fleeting hour that I've pray'd would stay,
Full of joy and of pain that's passed.

And perhaps you may know of its wondrous spell,
Its smiles and its bitter tears;
And emotions arise that no words can tell,
As you look back o'er the years.

But that one fleeting hour with its dream is gone,
And the mists of the night slowly rise;
Then 'tis well to forget and go bravely on
With a smile spite of tear dimmed eyes.

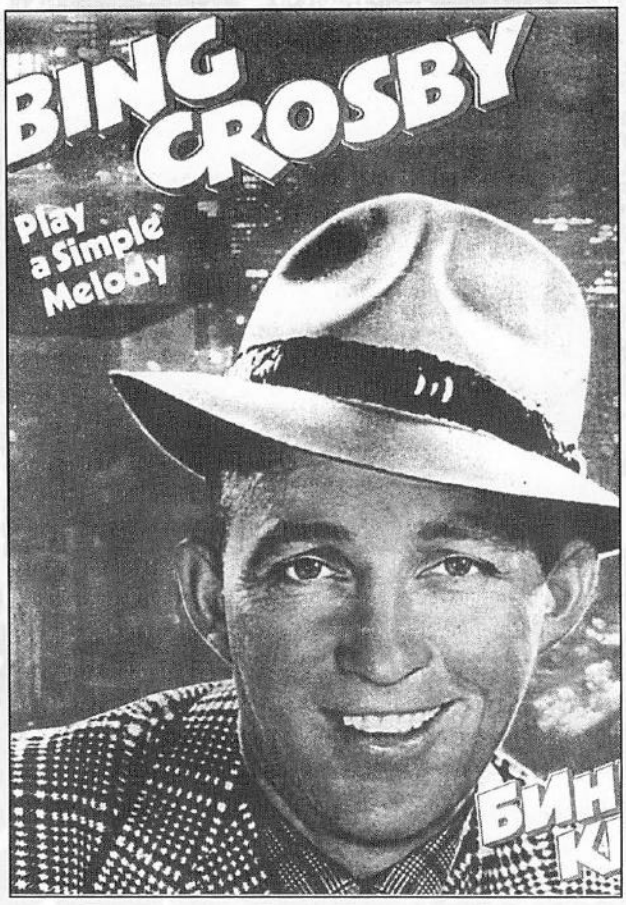
For one fleeting hour can make you strong,
If you will but heed its call;
And then ev'ry day shall be one glad song
Full of love that conquers all."

Well done, George for tracking this down. It's a song that Bing sang as a youngster at the parish hall in Spokane and I'll bet the applause was tremendous.

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

Peter Murray has recently picked up a Bing LP from Russia and copies of the cover are reproduced as this will probably be a new one to most members. The tracks are rather a mixed bag as you will see:

I'm Going to Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter
Play a Simple Melody (with Gary Crosby)
Some Sunny Day
White Christmas
Dardanella (with Louis Armstrong)
Pistol Packin' Mama (with the Andrews Sisters)
Dream a Little Dream of Me
Whispering
Don't Fence Me In (with the Andrews Sisters)
Basin Street Blues (with Connie Boswell)
Alexander's Ragtime Band (with Connie Boswell)
Yes Indeed (with Connie Boswell)
Rocky Mountain Moon (with Louis Armstrong)
Now is the Hour



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